CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

MONDAY ▸ JUNE 8, 2026 ▸ VOL: 11 ▸ ISSUE: 324 ▸ PAGES 12 ▸ ₹2.00

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₹29: DOMESTIC LPG PRICES SKYROCKET

Second hike since US-Iran war started; domestic LPG cylinder price was increased by Rs 60 on March 7

NEW DELHI

Domestic cooking gas LPG price has been raised by Rs 29 per cylinder, marking the second increase in three months as state-owned fuel retailers continue to grapple with elevated global energy costs.

The price of a 14.2-kg LPG cylinder in Delhi will rise to Rs 942 from Rs 913 with effect from June 7, according to industry sources.

The increase follows a Rs 60-per-cylinder hike on March 7 after the conflict in Middle East disrupted global energy supplies and drove up international fuel prices. Industry sources said that the increase had only partly offset losses incurred on domestic LPG sales.

State-run oil marketing companies were estimated to be losing about Rs 703 on every LPG cylinder sold before the latest revision, the sources said.

The LPG price hike comes amid a broader round of fuel price increases.

Commercial LPG cylinders

The price of commercial LPG cylinders, used by hotels, restaurants and other businesses, has seen multiple revisions over the past few months.

The most recent revision came on June 1, when the price of a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder was increased by Rs 42.

Latest domestic LPG cylinder price

City	New price	Old price
Bengaluru	Rs 944.50	Rs 915.50
New Delhi	Rs 942	Rs 913
Chennai	Rs 957.50	Rs 928.50
Hyderabad	Rs 996	Rs 967
Kolkata	Rs 968	Rs 939
Mumbai	Rs 941.40	Rs 912.50

Earlier, commercial LPG price was increased by Rs 1,000 in May, Rs 195.5 in April and Rs 114.5 in March.

Past fuel price hikes

Petrol and diesel prices have been raised by a cumulative Rs 7.50 per litre since mid-May, while compressed natural gas (CNG) rates have increased by about Rs 6 per kg.

Despite the recent increases, oil companies continue to sell petrol and diesel below cost, incurring losses of around Rs 11 per litre on petrol and Rs 33.6 per litre on diesel, according to industry sources.

The government has so far avoided a full pass-through of higher international energy prices to consumers, absorbing part of the increase through state-owned fuel retailers as global crude oil and fuel markets remain volatile.

The West Asia crisis, which started with the US-Isreal attacks on Iran on February 28, has resulted in the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important energy transit routes, leading to disruptions in crude oil and LPG supplies from the region.

Indian households pay lowest cooking gas prices in world: Govt

NEW DELHI

The Centre on Sunday said Indian households continue to receive cooking gas at among the lowest prices globally despite a sharp rise in international LPG prices.

In a statement, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry said that the Indian cylinder is cheaper than in any neighbouring country and far below the price in advanced economies such as the United States, Australia and Canada.

It noted that a beneficiary of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) pays 642 rupees for a 14.2-kg LPG cylinder after receiving a direct benefit transfer of 300 rupees on the first four refills annually, while the retail price for a general consumer in Delhi stands at 942 rupees.

The Ministry clarified that the price increased after the Saudi CP benchmark for LPG rose by about 46 per cent between February and June this year as the Hormuz disruption tightened Gulf supply, taking the cost of supplying a 14.2 kg cylinder to over 1,600 rupees. It underlined that the government has absorbed a substantial part of the increase to shield consumers from the impact of volatile global energy markets.

The Ministry highlighted that the effective price paid by Ujjwala beneficiaries remains lower than cooking gas prices in neighbouring countries, including Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

A PRICE COMPARISON

Country	Price per 14.2 kg cylinder (₹)	Ujjwala consumer pays less by (about)
India (Ujjwala, effective after revision)	642	---
Pakistan	1,046	39%
Nepal	1,207	47%
Bangladesh	1,225	48%
Sri Lanka	1,241	48%
us	1,755	63%
Australia	1,765	64%
Canada	2,411	73%

NEET-UG re-exam city intimation slip out, test on June 21

NEW DELHI

The National Testing Agency (NTA) on Sunday released the exam city intimation slip for the NEET-UG 2026 re-examination, scheduled to be held on June 21.

Candidates can now check their allotted examination city for NEET-UG 2026. Log in with your application number and password to view and download your slip, the NTA said in a post on X.

According to a public notice issued by the agency, the re-examination will be conducted in pen-and-paper mode from 2 pm to 5:15 pm across 551 cities in India and 14 cities abroad.

The NTA clarified that the exam city intimation slip is not the admit card and is being issued solely to inform candidates about the city where their examination centre will be located. "This is NOT the Admit Card. It shows only your exam city. The Admit Card will be issued later," the agency said.

It said that all efforts are made by the NTA to give 1st choice city to all students.

The agency further urged candidates to stay updated through its official websites The NEET-UG for admissions into medical courses took place on May 3 this year but was cancelled by the NTA on May 12 amid allegations of paper leak.

Worrisome! CM seeks report on gas price hike

BENGALURU

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Sunday said he had sought a report from officials on the recent hike in gas prices and expressed concern over the increase in the price of industrial gas and diesel.

Domestic cooking gas LPG price has been raised by Rs 29 per cylinder, marking the second increase in three months as state-owned fuel retailers continue to grapple with elevated global energy costs.

"I have sought a report on the gas (LPG) price hike. More than that industrial gas and industrial diesel prices have increased at an alarming rate. I am getting a report on it, I will speak on the matter tomorrow," he told reporters.

Kharge blasts Modi govt for LPG hike

Soaring domestic LPG prices threaten to devastate the kitchens of the common people! The Modi government has hiked the price of domestic LPG cylinders by Rs.89 over the last four months.

-Mallikarjun Khar ge, Congress pre sident

INDIA bloc huddle in Delhi today: TMC among 23 parties to attend

NEW DELHI

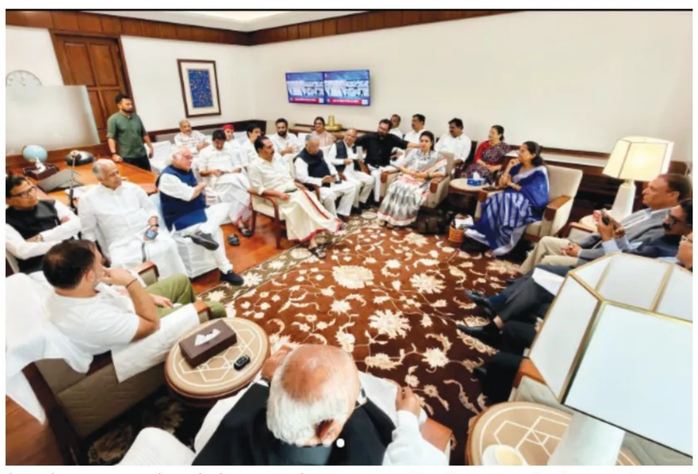
In all, 23 political parties have confirmed their participation in the INDIA bloc meeting in New Delhi on Monday, the Congress said, asserting that the opposition alliance remains united through its diversity.

The meeting, branded as the 'INDIA janbandhan' gathering, will be held at the Constitution Club and is expected to discuss the alliance's future strategy, including preparations for the 2029 Lok Sabha elections.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "23 political parties have confirmed participation in the INDIA janbandhan meeting at Constitution Club, New Delhi, on Monday, June 8, 2026, at 12 noon."

The event is the bloc's first major gathering since recent assembly election losses and will focus on strategy for national issues and the 2029 general elections.

Prominent attendees include Mamata Banerjee, Uddhav Thackeray, Akhilesh Yadav, Rahul Gandhi, and Mallikarjun Kharge, with leaders emphasising unity despite diversity.



DMK boycott over Tamil Nadu fallout

The DMK announced it will boycott the meeting, citing 'betrayal' by Congress after it supported Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam post-Tamil Nadu polls despite contesting as DMK's ally. DMK leaders said the decision respects the hurt sentiments of their cadres and marks the end of a two-decade-long partnership. The boycott removes a major southern ally from the table at a time when the bloc seeks to project strength against the BJP.

CPI(M) attends but raises Kerala concerns

Despite tensions, CPI(M) will send MP John Brittas to the meeting while seeking clarification from Congress over campaign allegations of a CPI(M)-BJP understanding in Kerala. CPI(M) general secretary M.A.

Baby's letter to Mallikarjun Kharge criticised repeated remarks by Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, as undermining opposition unity. The issue is expected to surface during discussions, reflecting the alliance's challenge in balancing state-level rivalries with national coordination.

INDIA bloc to meet

Who's attending?

Leaders from 23 parties, including Congress, TMC, SP, RJD, and Shiv Sena (UBT), will meet in Delhi to discuss strategy and coordination.

Who's skipping?

DMK will boycott over Congress's Tamil Nadu move; AAP is also unlikely to attend, while CPI(M) will participate despite tensions.

What's at stake?

The meeting will shape the bloc's approach to the BJP ahead of 2029 polls, testing its unity amid public criticism and internal disputes.

BJP questions bloc's cohesion

BJP leaders have seized on the visible cracks, describing the INDIA bloc as lacking mission and riddled with infighting. Spokespersons like Shehzad Poonawalla and Sanjay Saraogi claimed the alliance has 'only confusion', while Union Minister Raj Bhushan Choudhary called the meeting a 'self-serving attempt'. Opposition leaders like Pramod Tiwari countered that critics should wait for the meeting's outcomes before judging its unity.

Hyderabad man shot dead in US

HYDERABAD

A man from Hyderabad, identified as Anshul Kuncha was allegedly shot dead in United States' Philidelohia while delivering pizzas on the intervening night of June 5 and 6, as per his family members.

The Consulate General of India in New York in an X post said : "We are deeply saddened by the untimely demise of Mr. Anshul Kuncha, an Indian national in Philadelphia, PA. Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences to his family during this difficult time. The Consulate is in touch with Anushul's family and is extending all possible help."

Kuncha worked with an MNC in North Philadelphia and used to deliver pizza on weekends for extra source of income, Tanvi, sister of the deceased, told the media. "We were informed that he (Anshul) was shot in the head three times and left on the road," Tanvi said, adding that nothing was stolen from the 28-year-old man.

She said that he was told to deliver pizza in an abandoned area and they later came to know it was a "decoy" They took my brother and killed him," she said. She appealed to the Ministry of External Affairs, seeking to bring back Kuncha's mortal remains back home at the earlier.

In first major reshuffle, DKS govt appoints Pronab Mohanty head of CID

BENGALURU

In a reshuffle of senior IAS and IPS officials after the new cabinet took charge, the Karnataka government on Sunday posted senior IAS officer Anjum Parwez — who served as Additional Chief Secretary to the chief minister under the Siddaramaiah regime — as ACS of the Forest, Ecology and Environment Department with immediate effect.

After DK Shivakumar took charge as Chief Minister on June 3, the government appointed Tushar Girinath as Additional Chief Secretary to the chief minister, replacing Parwez, who had been awaiting a posting since.

Munish Moudgil, Special Commissioner (Admin, Revenue and IT), Greater Bengaluru Authority, has been given concurrent charge of the post of Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister (Programme and Project Implementation), an official notification said.

The post has been declared equivalent in status and responsibilities to the cadre post of Principal Secretary to the Government.

Deepa Cholan, Secretary, Development Department (Urban Development and Municipalities), has been transferred as Secretary, Transport Department, Bengaluru, vice Dr Prasad NV, transferred. Cauvery BB, who was awaiting a posting, has been posted to the position vacated by Cholan.

Dr Venkatesh MV, Secretary, Planning, Programme Monitoring and Statistics Department, has been transferred as Registrar for Co-operative Societies against an existing vacancy.

Dr Selvamani R, Managing Director, Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Drainage Board, has been transferred as Commissioner for Transport and Road Safety, Bengaluru, vice Yogeesh AM, transferred.

Mohanty gets extra duties of DGP (Cyber Crimes)

In a separate notification, Pronab Mohanty, Director General of Police, Internal Security Division, has been transferred and posted as Director General of Police (DGP), Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Special Units and Economic Offences. He has additionally been given concurrent charge of Director General of Police (Cyber Crimes), Criminal Investigation Department, Bengaluru, with immediate effect. Chandragupta, Inspector General of Police, Security (Intelligence), has been transferred as Inspector General of Police (Intelligence) in the downgraded post, vice Labhu Rarn, transferred. The post of Inspector General of Police, Intelligence, has been declared equivalent in status and responsibilities to the cadre post of Inspector General of Police, Criminal Investigation Department, as per Rule.

GRATITUDE TOUR

CM takes metro to Kanakapura to thank voters

BENGALURU

Chief Minister D K Shivakumar travelled by metro to Kanakapura on Sunday to thank voters of his constituency.

The 'gratitude tour' is his first visit to Kanakapura, located in neighbouring Bengaluru South district, after taking over as the CM.

Speaking to reporters ahead of boarding the metro train, he said, "People have brought me from Doddalahalli (his native village) till here. People have got me from Doddalahalli, Sathanur (his earlier assembly segment), Kanakapura, Bengaluru South till here. People there wanted to see me (after becoming CM),I'm not able to give them time, those who have come here to meet me were not able to. I too had requested them not to come to Bengaluru."

"I had told them I will come to meet them. So my first visit is to my constituency to meet my people and express my gratitude to them. It is my duty to express my gratitude to those who have nurtured me politically for last 40 years."

Noting that about 20-25 locations have been identified to meet people during the visit today, the CM said, "I will appoint officials separately to meet them and do their work. People there are politically aware. It is my duty to serve them."

During the journey, Shivakumar also greeted fellow passengers and interacted with the commuters.

People have brought me from Doddalahalli (his native village) till here. People have got me from Doddalahalli, Sathanur (his earlier assembly segment), Kanakapura, Bengaluru South till here. People there wanted to see me (after becoming CM),I'm not able to give them time, those who have come here to meet me were not able to. I too had requested them not to come to Bengaluru.

- DK Shivakumar, CM

QUICK READ

Seven arrested for attempted hunting in Thattekere forest

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Seven persons were arrested by forest officials for allegedly attempting to hunt wildlife in the Thattekere forest area of Anekal taluk. According to forest authorities, four of the accused are from Yadgiri district, while the remaining three are from Harohalli in Ramanagara district. They were reportedly trying to hunt in the Mahadeshwara forest region near Thattekere. Acting on specific information, officials of the Forest Department conducted a raid and apprehended the suspects. A car and a battery allegedly used for hunting activities were also seized during the operation. Anekal Wildlife Zone Forest Officer B.K. Pushpalatha said legal action has been initiated against the accused under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. The operation was carried out under the supervision of senior forest officials.

OC exemption extended to 2,400 sq ft buildings

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has expanded the exemption from Occupancy Certificate (OC) requirements for electricity connections to a larger category of residential buildings within the Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA). Under a new order issued, residential buildings constructed on plots up to 2,400 sq ft, with a permissible deviation of up to 20 per cent, can obtain electricity connections without producing an OC from municipal corporations or town planning authorities. The exemption applies to buildings with ground-plus-three floors or stilt parking plus four floors. The government said the move aims to ease access to essential services and reduce delays faced by homeowners. Officials estimate that over four lakh residential buildings in Bengaluru could benefit from the revised order.

Lokayukta directs officials to prioritise garbage disposal

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Lokayukta B.S. Patil has directed officials to urgently address garbage disposal issues across Bengaluru following numerous complaints of unscientific waste dumping in the city's five corporations. During inspections at several locations, Patil reviewed sanitation conditions and instructed officials of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and civic agencies to take immediate corrective measures. According to a Lokayukta press note, five teams have been formed to study the issue.

High Court: Landowners cannot be forced to surrender land free for roads

Court says property rights remain protected despite public project benefits.

BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has ruled that civic authorities cannot compel private landowners to relinquish their land free of cost for road widening projects, reaffirming that constitutional protection over private property cannot be diluted merely because a public infrastructure project may benefit the owner.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj delivered the ruling while allowing a petition filed by Bengaluru resident M. Shashikumar, who challenged a condition imposed by the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP),

now the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), for the release of a modified building plan.

The court observed that if authorities require private land for public purposes such as road widening under the Master Plan, they must follow legally recognised statutory procedures and provide compensation or Transferable Development Rights (TDR) wherever applicable. Free relinquishment of land without any consideration, the court held, is not a legally permissible option.

Shashikumar had entered into a joint development agreement with a private developer for 2 acres and 4.5 guntas of land at Thalaghattapura village on Kanakapura Road. In 2024, he applied for a modified sanction plan for an apartment project and paid nearly Rs 1.3 crore in fees.

Although the modified plan was approved on April 26, 2024, authorities did not release it. Instead, they issued an endorsement on September 30, 2024, stating that the approved plan would be released only if the petitioner surrendered 371.8 square metres, or around 4,200 square feet, of land free of cost for the proposed road widening.

Despite repeated representations, no action was taken, prompting Shashikumar to approach the High Court.

The petitioner argued that courts had consistently held that private landowners cannot be compelled to hand over land to the State or its agencies without authority of law. The BBMP, however, contended that widening the road from 31 metres to 45 metres would significantly benefit the petitioner by improving access and infrastructure around the property.

Rejecting this argument, Justice Govindaraj said incidental benefits arising from public projects cannot override constitutional safeguards protecting private property rights.

The court further noted that while any increase in property value resulting from road widening may be considered while determining compensation, it cannot be used as a justification to deny compensation altogether.

The ruling is expected to have wider implications for urban development projects involving private land acquisition across Bengaluru.

Climate action starts at home, Bengaluru experts tell citizens

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

As World Environment Day was marked with tree-planting drives and awareness campaigns across the city, environmental experts at the Bengaluru Climate Summit stressed that meaningful climate action begins with changes in individual behaviour rather than symbolic gestures alone.

Speaking at the summit organised by Vimove Foundation, experts said governments and corporations play a critical role in addressing climate change, but citizens also have a responsibility to adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives.

Architect Narayanan Subramanian of VaNashri Consulting highlighted the importance of decentralised waste management.

Cyber fraudster exploits exam fee urgency, cheats man of Rs 1 lakh

CH NEW,SBENGALURU

A Bengaluru resident lost nearly Rs 1 lakh after cyber fraudsters allegedly impersonated his niece's friend and convinced him to transfer money under the pretext of helping the student pay her college fees abroad.

According to a complaint lodged with the CK Achukattu police, the complainant's niece, who is pursuing an MBBS course overseas, had informed family members that she urgently required funds to pay her college fees. She reportedly told them that failure to clear the dues before the deadline could prevent her from appearing for upcoming examinations.

Amid the rush to arrange the money, the complainant was contacted by a woman identifying herself as "Deepika", who claimed to be the student's friend. She allegedly suggested an alternative method for transferring the funds, saying that sending the money to an account belonging to one of her acquaintances would ensure the entire amount reached the student without deductions related to foreign exchange charges.

Believing the claim, the complainant transferred Rs 98,000 and an additional Rs 2,000 through Google Pay to the account details provided by the caller on May 9.

However, shortly after receiving the money, the woman became unreachable and switched off her phone. Repeated attempts to contact her proved unsuccessful, prompting the family to suspect fraud.

The victim later discovered that the money had not reached the student and approached the police.

Based on the complaint, CK Achukattu police registered a case under relevant provisions of the Information Technology Act and Sections 318 (cheating) and 319 (cheating by personation) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

A senior police officer said preliminary investigations indicate that cybercriminals may have impersonated the student's friend to gain the complainant's trust and exploit the urgency surrounding the examination fee payment.

Cycle lane near IT corridor turns garbage transfer point, residents upset

BENGALURU

A cycle lane off ITPL Road in Bengaluru's bustling technology corridor has been transformed into a garbage-transfer point, triggering complaints from residents who say the move has rendered the stretch unsafe for pedestrians, cyclists and schoolchildren.

The affected section on Krishna Temple Road, connecting Garudacharpalya and Hoodi, runs behind several technology parks housing companies such as Amazon, Google and ABB. Residents allege that what was once a functional cycle lane is now occupied by nearly a dozen auto-tippers and two garbage compactors used for waste transfer operations.

The parked vehicles have blocked access to the adjoining footpath, while the area is reportedly plagued by foul odour and traffic congestion. According to residents, the cycle lane was actively used between 2022 and early 2025 before waste-collection contractors began operating from the site.

They claim that triangular barriers installed to separate the cycle track from the main road were either removed or damaged to accommodate larger garbage vehicles.

Ashok Kumar, a local resident, said the situation has severely affected daily commuters. He noted that nearly 50 children from nearby residential layouts walk to schools along the route and are now forced onto the carriageway due to the blocked footpath.

"Many office-goers also use this road after getting down at Garudacharpalya Metro station. The parked vehicles cause bottlenecks, especially during peak morning hours," he said.

A dedicated cycle track behind major tech parks in east Bengaluru has been converted into a garbage-transfer station.

No designated transfer site, says official

Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) Assistant General Manager C. Jyothi said the problem stems from the lack of a designated waste-transfer site in the area.

"We have asked contractors to use land next to a government library, but the space is insufficient. We will instruct them to use different locations on a rotational basis. At present, there is no dedicated plot for transferring waste from auto-tippers to compactors," she said.

Wing Commander (Retd) T. Madhusudan, a resident of Gopalan Urban Woods, said residents had repeatedly urged contractors to shift the operations elsewhere. He alleged that waste from sewage pits in nearby layouts was also being dumped along the road, posing a risk to stormwater drains, lakes and groundwater.

Retired ISRO scientist Rajesh Seth recalled how children once used the cycle lane regularly. "It was a safe space for cycling. Now it has been taken over by garbage vehicles, many of which are driven recklessly," he said.

Residents further alleged that complaints lodged through the Greater Bengaluru Authority's Sahaya app were closed without any meaningful action.

SUDHEENDRA URGES TREE PLANTATION TO COMBAT GLOBAL WARMING

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee Vice-President and Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board Chairman S.E. Sudheendra on Sunday called upon citizens, particularly students, to actively participate in environmental conservation efforts by planting and nurturing trees.

He was speaking at a World Environment Day programme held at Byugal Rock Garden in Basavanagudi, Bengaluru, in the presence of Vikhyathananda Swamiji. The event marked the launch of several initiatives aimed at promoting environmental protection and sustainability.

Addressing the gathering, Sudheendra said the theme of World Environment Day 2026 focuses on tackling global warming, one of the most pressing challenges facing the world today. He stressed the need for collective efforts to reduce rising temperatures through sustained environmental conservation measures.

Highlighting the role of renewable energy, he said the Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board has prioritised the promotion of biofuel plantations as part of its action plan to address climate change. According to him, biofuel crops not only contribute to green energy production but also help improve environmental conditions and enhance oxygen levels in the atmosphere.

Sudheendra said biofuel seeds and saplings would be made available to encourage wider participation in plantation drives. He urged students to take a leading role in protecting the environment, describing them as future leaders responsible for preserving natural resources for coming generations.

The Board Chairman also praised Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar for giving importance to environmental protection programmes, particularly initiatives related to green energy development. Such measures, he said, would contribute towards creating a favourable environment for achieving the Net Zero 2070 goal.

As part of the programme, notebooks and stationery items were distributed to students.

Among those present were Basavanagudi MLA Ravi Subramaniam, BMTC Chairman V.S. Aaradhya, Congress leaders Shekhar, Krishna, Nagaraj, Gutte Nagaraj, Kabadi Ramachandra, Raghu and Anand Kumar, besides environmentalists, members of the public and students.

Government PU college students scarce among Karnataka CET top rankers

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

Students from government pre-university colleges continue to have a limited presence among the top performers in the Karnataka Common Entrance Test (CET), according to data released by the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA).

Only one government PU college student secured a place in the top 10 ranks across all streams. Basavaraj Avati from Vijayapura secured the fourth rank in Veterinary Sciences, while all other top rank holders came from private institutions.

The KEA data showed that just 12 students from government PU colleges featured among the top 1,000 ranks in engineering. Of these, five were from Bengaluru Urban, two each from Dakshina Kannada and Uttara Kannada, and one each from Chitradurga, Kalaburagi and Mysuru districts.

Government college students also made their presence felt in other streams, with 15 students in BNYS, 13 in Agriculture, 11 in Pharmacy, and 10 each in Veterinary Science and Nursing figuring among the top 1,000 ranks.

The numbers improved slightly in broader rankings. In the top 5,000 ranks, government PU college representation ranged from 39 students in Veterinary Science to 53 in Engineering. In the top 10,000 ranks, 108 government college students secured places.

The data also highlighted the challenges faced by rural and Kannada-medium students. Among rural candidates, only 79 students were ranked within the top 1,000, while 499 made it to the top 5,000 and 1,292 featured in the top 10,000.

PROJECT SAVINGS

Bengaluru Metro-suburban double-decker corridor saved Rs 169 crore: K-RIDE

BENGALURU

An innovative double-decker transport corridor developed jointly by Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) Limited (K-RIDE) and Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has helped save between Rs 150 crore and Rs 169 crore in project costs, according to a report released by K-RIDE.

The engineering solution was implemented near Benniganahalli, where Bengaluru's suburban rail and Metro networks share a common right of way. Under an agreement signed in 2021, the suburban rail Corridor-4 (Kanaka Line), connecting Heelalige and Rajanakunte, has been positioned directly below Namma Metro's Blue Line (Phase 2A) viaduct near the Benniganahalli flyover.

The arrangement creates a unique multi-level transit corridor that accommodates two mass rapid transit systems within the same alignment. According to K-RIDE, the design not only reduced construction costs but also minimised land acquisition requirements.

The agency stated that the project avoided the acquisition of nearly 1.6 acres of premium urban land, preventing the displacement of around 600 residents. Officials described the model as a significant example of efficient infrastructure planning in a densely populated city.

For nearly half a kilometre, Metro trains and suburban rail services will operate parallel to each other on separate levels. The corridor also integrates two different electrical traction systems—alternating current (AC) and direct current (DC)—a design that has been vetted by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

Meanwhile, K-RIDE is advancing plans to integrate suburban rail infrastructure at Yeshwantpur, which is expected to emerge as one of Bengaluru's key multi-modal transport hubs. The suburban rail station, part of Corridor-1 connecting KSR Bengaluru and Devanahalli with a branch line to Kempegowda International Airport, will be positioned between the existing Metro and railway stations.

The agency said construction of an elevated structure linking the stations will be taken up soon, particularly as the Yeshwantpur railway station is undergoing redevelopment by Indian Railways.

Since the suburban rail alignment passes above the redeveloped station infrastructure, K-RIDE has proposed a permanent viaduct of approximately 500 metres within railway land to ensure seamless connectivity along Corridor-1.

The elevated section will connect the KSR Bengaluru–Devanahalli suburban rail corridor and support future passenger movement between multiple transport systems. K-RIDE said CEM India has been awarded the contract to execute the construction of the elevated structure.

Minister Yathindra Siddaramaiah criticises LPG price hike impact

Vijayapura minister criticises LPG price hike, saying fuel costs will burden households and increase overall economic pressure.

VIJAYAPURA

Vijayapura witnessed sharp political criticism over the recent domestic LPG cylinder price hike, with Karnataka Urban Development Minister Yathindra Siddaramaiah stating that the increase will burden common people and negatively affect the economy. He accused the Union Government of failing to

protect consumers from rising fuel costs and of implementing policies that add pressure on households.

Speaking during his visit to the District Congress Office in Vijayapura, the minister said his programme had been scheduled well in advance and was not linked to his recent cabinet appointment. He clarified that the visit was originally planned for early June but was rescheduled to June 7 due to his ministerial responsibilities.

On the issue of LPG pricing, Yathindra Siddaramaiah argued that the Central Government had not passed on the benefits of declining international crude oil prices to consumers in the past. He said that when global crude prices were lower, fuel and cooking gas prices in India should have been reduced, which would have softened the impact of current hikes on households.

He further claimed that the previous Congress government had taken steps to shield citizens from sudden fuel price fluctuations and maintained mechanisms to keep inflation under control. According to him, the present rise in LPG prices will particularly affect middle-class and economically weaker families, increasing their monthly expenses and contributing to a higher cost of living.

The minister added that rising energy costs have a ripple effect across sectors, ultimately influencing overall economic conditions. He urged governments to prioritise public welfare policies that protect citizens from volatility in global fuel markets and ensure greater price stability in essential commodities like cooking gas.

QUICK READ

17 drug users traced in Bidar under Sanmitra Project

Bidar

In a drive under the Sanmitra Project aimed at making the district drug-free, police in Bidar identified 17 individuals involved in consuming ganja and other narcotic substances, registering 15 cases against them. Authorities said 11 individuals were taken into custody under Gandhi Gunj Police Station limits, two in the New Town Police Station area, three in Bhalki Town limits, and one in Humnabad limits. All identified persons have been referred for medical care and psychological counselling as part of rehabilitation efforts. Police officials stated that the initiative combines enforcement with treatment and monitoring. Superintendent of Police Pradeep Gunti said efforts will be intensified to curb drug use and ensure strict action against those involved in narcotics-related offences in the district.

Bidar police raid illegal gambling dens, 16 arrested

Bidar

In Bidar, Gandhi Gunj Police conducted raids on two illegal gambling dens following credible information and arrested 16 people. At one location on the first floor of a building owned by Vijaykumar Patil, nine accused were taken into custody and cash along with vehicles was seized. In another raid near Sarvayog Hospital, seven more accused were arrested and cash was recovered from the spot. Overall, police arrested 16 accused and seized ₹1,04,900 in cash along with a car worth ₹4 lakh and two scooters worth ₹1 lakh. Cases have been registered at Gandhi Gunj Police Station and investigation is continuing. Police said further action will follow as inquiry progresses onward.

Man dies after alleged finance company harassment

Yadgir

In Yadgir district of Karnataka, a 30-year-old man named Somappa Nandappa from Kachapur village in Surpur taluk allegedly died by suicide after harassment by private finance company staff over loan EMI dues. Police said he had taken a vehicle loan for a Bolero pickup about two years ago and had defaulted on instalments for five months. Allegations state that finance company representatives repeatedly visited his house and made phone calls demanding repayment, causing severe distress. He was found dead at a house in Kembhavi, and Kembhavi Police Station has registered a case for investigation. Authorities urged people facing distress to seek help through Tele-MANAS helpline and support services immediately available.

Bidar prepared for Kharif season amid supplies assurance

BIDAR

Officials in Bidar district of Karnataka have announced full preparedness for the 2026 Kharif season, targeting sowing across 4.12 lakh hectares, according to the Agriculture Department. Seed and fertilizer availability has been ensured, with over 1.04 lakh quintals of certified seeds allocated and about 37,800 quintals already distributed to farmers.

Bidar district is fully prepared for Kharif 2026 with adequate seeds, fertilizers, and strong agricultural planning measures initiatives

Officials said strict monitoring is being conducted at dealer points and interstate check-posts to prevent diversion of fertilizers and seeds to other regions. The district has also faced supply challenges due to a Middle East crisis affecting fertilizer imports, prompting authorities to advise farmers against panic buying or overuse of DAP fertilizer. Instead, farmers are being encouraged to use alternative complex fertilizers such as 20:20:0:13, 12:32:16, and 15:15:15 to maintain soil health and reduce costs.

According to officials, the district receives an average rainfall of 838 mm, and pre-monsoon rainfall this year has been 31 percent above normal, supporting early agricultural activities. At present, substantial stocks of urea, DAP, NPKS, MOP, and SSP are available with dealers, ensuring uninterrupted supply during peak sowing months.

Out of 189 Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies, 165 have been licensed for fertilizer sales, strengthening last-mile distribution across the district. Officials reiterated that farmers should avoid panic purchases and rely on official guidance from the Agriculture Department to ensure balanced input use and sustainable cultivation practices.

Department officials added that continuous farmer awareness programmes are being conducted through Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies and extension officers to promote balanced fertilizer use, soil testing, and efficient water management practices, ensuring sustainable productivity during the monsoon cropping season across Bidar district.

Authorities also emphasized that real-time monitoring of rainfall patterns and crop conditions will help in timely advisories, reduce input wastage, and improve yield outcomes for farmers across the region in the coming agricultural cycle this year season.

Vijayapura minister M.B. Patil criticises LPG price hike, calling it unjust to poor and burdening common households.

Vijayapura Minister M.B. Patil slams LPG price hike

VIJAYAPURA

Vijayapura Minister M.B. Patil has strongly criticised the Union Government over the recent increase in domestic LPG prices and rising costs of essential commodities, saying the policies have placed an unbearable burden on ordinary citizens. He termed the price hike as unjust to the poor and questioned whether the current economic situation reflects the "Achhe Din" promised by the Centre.

Speaking to reporters in Vijayapura, Patil said citizens should compare present-day prices with those before 2014, including LPG cylinder rates, gold prices, and the rupee's value against the US dollar. He alleged that inflation, unemployment, and financial stress on households have significantly increased, making daily life more difficult for the common man.

He further stated that the rise in LPG prices will especially impact poor and middle-class families already struggling with higher living costs. According to him, essential commodities have become increasingly unaffordable, deepening economic distress among vulnerable sections of society.

Patil also urged the media to highlight public issues objectively, noting that some sections are perceived to favour corporate interests. However, he added that the growth of social media has enabled citizens to access diverse information and better understand ground realities.

Responding to political questions regarding the INDIA Bloc meeting scheduled for June 28, Patil described internal differences as routine and said they would be resolved by the alliance leadership. He expressed confidence that the high command would take appropriate decisions on coordination and strategy.

Commenting on Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's recent train travel, he said the decision reflected the impact of rising fuel prices, which is pushing even public representatives toward public transport. Patil reiterated that controlling inflation and reducing the burden on citizens should be a top priority for governments.

Health funds diverted sparks public concern

YADGIR

Yadgir has witnessed controversy after ₹1.25 crore originally allocated for medical equipment under the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board (KKRDB) was reportedly diverted to road and drainage works, raising concerns over healthcare priorities in the district. The funds were part of a ₹2 crore allocation for strengthening hospital infrastructure during the 2025–26 Macro Project.

According to official records, the District Health Officer was tasked with implementing the medical equipment procurement, while the Deputy Commissioner oversaw the project. However, a revised order issued by the KKRDB Secretary, following a request from the district administration, changed the allocation pattern. Only ₹75 lakh was retained for medical equipment at the Government Public Hospital in Shahapur, while the remaining ₹1.25 crore was redirected to civic works.

The diverted funds include ₹80 lakh for CC road and drainage-related works in Naganur village of Surpur taluk,

₹20 lakh for a drinking water project in Evur village, and ₹25 lakh for road construction in Shakhapur village. This shift has triggered criticism, especially as several government hospitals in the district continue to face shortages of essential medical infrastructure and specialist facilities.

Healthcare officials expressed concern over the decision. A senior official from the Mother and Child Hospital noted that the facility lacks a dedicated pediatric ward and has limited post-operative care capacity for children, despite rising healthcare needs. They said the diverted funds could have significantly improved maternal and child health services in the district.

The District Health Officer confirmed approval for the purchase of medical equipment worth ₹75 lakh for Shahapur Government Hospital but stated that they had no information about the diversion of the remaining funds to other sectors.

Court orders seizure of KKRTC bus in Bidar

BIDAR

Bidar witnessed legal enforcement action after a bus belonging to the Kalyana Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC) was seized for non-payment of court-ordered compensation in a fatal road accident case. The incident relates to a 2021 accident in Bhalki taluk, where a KKRTC bus reportedly collided with a motorcycle, leaving the rider and pillion seriously injured. One of the victims, identified as Rekha, later died while undergoing treatment in a hospital. Following the incident, the deceased woman's family filed a compensation claim in court against the transport corporation. After reviewing the case, the court ruled in favour of the family and directed KKRTC to pay compensation for the loss and suffering caused by the accident. The judgment mandated a compensation amount of ₹28,80,753.

Despite the court's clear order, the compensation was not deposited by the corporation within the stipulated time. As a result, legal enforcement proceedings were initiated, leading to the seizure of a KKRTC bus as per court directives. Officials carried out the action to ensure compliance with the judgment and to secure payment to the victim's family.

Advocates K.K. Shiva Kumar and Anaraj Hawage, representing the complainant family, stated that the seized bus will remain under custody until the full compensation amount is deposited by the corporation. They emphasized that the enforcement action was necessary due to continued non-compliance with the court order.

The case has drawn attention to delayed compensation settlements in motor accident claims involving public transport agencies. Legal experts note that such enforcement actions underline the judiciary's role in ensuring accountability when state-run corporations fail to comply with compensation orders.

Authorities have not issued further comments regarding the seizure, while the process for recovery of dues is expected to continue through legal channels until full compliance is achieved.

Kalaburagi Corporation enforces fines for littering

KALABURAGI

Kalaburagi City Corporation has announced strict enforcement measures, including fines, against individuals found dumping garbage in public places as part of its intensified cleanliness drive. The move is aimed at improving urban sanitation and promoting scientific waste management practices across the city.

The initiative was highlighted during a special awareness workshop held at the Corporation hall as part of World Environment Day 2026 celebrations. Elected representatives were briefed on the importance of four-category waste segregation at source, which officials said is essential for effective and sustainable waste management. Authorities stressed that proper segregation of biodegradable, recyclable, hazardous, and inert waste plays a key role in protecting public health and maintaining environmental quality.

To curb illegal dumping, the corporation has identified major garbage-prone locations across the city and installed CCTV cameras for continuous monitoring. Officials confirmed that enforcement drives have already begun, with violators being identified through camera footage and penalised. In one recent incident, a resident was fined after being caught dumping waste in a public area, demonstrating the corporation's strict stance on violations.

Civic officials stated that these measures are being implemented in line with the directives of the Supreme Court and the Solid Waste Management Rules. They further urged citizens to cooperate by handing over segregated waste to municipal sanitation vehicles and avoiding littering in public spaces.

City Mayor Varsha Jane, Corporation Commissioner Avinash Shinde, and other officials including standing committee chairpersons and engineers attended the programme. Technical experts also guided participants on improving waste handling systems and strengthening public awareness campaigns.

ASI constable caught accepting bribe in POCSO case

KALABURAGI

Kalaburagi witnessed a major anti-corruption action after Lokayukta police caught an Assistant Sub-Inspector and a woman police constable red-handed while allegedly accepting a ₹10,000 bribe in a POCSO case linked to Station Bazaar Police Station.

The accused have been identified as ASI Sharanabasappa and constable Jyoti, both attached to the same police station. According to Lokayukta officials, the complaint was filed by the mother of a minor victim after she was allegedly pressured to pay money for case-related assistance. Initially, the accused reportedly collected ₹1,000 claiming it was needed for payments to the Public Prosecutor, and later demanded an additional ₹10,000 for providing further legal support.

Unwilling to comply with the demand, the complainant approached the Lokayukta authorities and submitted a formal complaint. Acting on it, a trap was organized by a team led by Lokayukta Police Inspector Arunkumar Muragundi under the supervision of Superintendent of Police Siddaraju.

VBJ SCHEME OPPOSITION

Farmers protest VBJ Ramji Scheme in Kalaburagi

KALABURAGI

Kalaburagi witnessed a protest led by the Karnataka Prantha Raitha Sangha, where farmers and rural labourers gathered in front of the District Panchayat office demanding withdrawal of the proposed VBJ Ramji Scheme. The protest also called for stronger implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) to ensure stable rural employment opportunities.

Participants in the demonstration argued that MGNREGA has been crucial in providing livelihood security and supporting rural households through guaranteed wage employment. They urged the government to strengthen the scheme further rather than introducing alternative employment frameworks that they believe could weaken job security for rural workers.

Addressing the gathering, district president Sharanabasappa Mamashetti criticized the proposed VBJ Ramji Act, which is expected to be implemented from July 1. He alleged that the scheme introduces a contract-based system that could negatively impact wage workers and reduce employment stability in rural areas. He demanded that the government withdraw the proposal and continue prioritizing MGNREGA implementation with adequate funding and support.

Other speakers at the protest echoed similar concerns, emphasizing that any changes to rural employment schemes must safeguard the interests of labourers and ensure consistent income opportunities for vulnerable communities. They warned that weakening MGNREGA could lead to increased rural distress and unemployment.

Several farmer leaders and rural workers, including organisation vice-president Mounesh Nalwar and others, participated in the protest. The demonstrators urged authorities to engage in dialogue with stakeholders before implementing any policy changes that affect rural employment systems.

QUICK READ

Environment protection is everyone's duty says Judge

Hanagalla

Chief Senior Civil Judge and Chairman of Taluka Legal Services Committee Mahesh S Patil said environmental protection is everyone's responsibility while inaugurating World Environment Day programme organised jointly by the court and Forest Department. He said trees play a vital role in maintaining a healthy environment and urged people to plant more saplings for a better future. Additional Senior Civil Judge Amola J Hirikude said a balanced environment is essential for good health while Junior Civil Judge Aishwarya C Pattanashetty stressed the need to protect nature in modern times with public support. Bar Association President M C Mahanthinamath called for daily environmental action.

Vijayapura to host Prof Krishnappa remembrance event

Vijayapura

The Karnataka Dalit Sangharsh Samiti Ambedkarism District Committee has announced that the birth anniversary of Professor B Krishnappa will be celebrated in a grand manner at Dr B R Ambedkar Circle in Vijayapura on June 9 2026. Belgaum Divisional Convener Sanju Vai Kambagi said Ambedkarites who believe in constitutional values and human rights are invited to participate in large numbers. He urged thinkers writers and social activists to join the programme and make the event meaningful. Organisers said the celebration aims to promote equality awareness and social justice values among citizens through community participation and remembrance of Prof Krishnappa.

Miscreants damage Dr Babu Jagjivan Ram nameboard

Kalaburagi

Members of the District Jayantotsava Committee in Kalaburagi have submitted a complaint to the Assistant Commissioner of Police after the nameplate of Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram at Filterbed Asyra Colony was allegedly removed by miscreants under the influence of alcohol. Committee leaders said the incident happened on Saturday night when miscreants damaged the nameboard and broke liquor bottles in the area, disturbing local residents. They demanded strict legal action and immediate arrest of those responsible, stating that the act has hurt public sentiments and disrespected the social reformer.

Parameshwar seeks blessings at Siddaganga Mutt

Deputy CM said Tumakuru's water issues will be addressed, Yettinahole project delayed due to forest land acquisition hurdles

TUMAKURU

Deputy Chief Minister G. Parameshwar visited Siddaganga Mutt in Tumakuru on Sunday and offered prayers at the sacred throne of the late Sri Shivakumara Swamiji. He said it has been a long-standing tradition for his family to visit the revered mutt and seek blessings on important occasions. After assuming office as Deputy Chief Minister, he chose to visit the mutt to receive spiritual guidance and blessings for his responsibilities in the government.

Speaking to reporters during the visit, Parameshwar said the blessings of Siddaganga Mutt would help him carry out his duties effectively, especially in handling important matters related to governance and development. He noted that his family has maintained a close connection with the mutt for many years and has always sought its blessings during significant milestones.

The Deputy Chief Minister also spoke about development issues concerning Tumakuru district. He said the government is committed to addressing irrigation and drinking water challenges in the region. Referring to the Yettinahole project, he said water was expected to reach parts of Tumakuru by June or July, but delays had occurred due to pending land acquisition issues involving the Forest Department. He assured that the government would work to resolve these hurdles and ensure that water reaches the district at the earliest.

Highlighting issues faced by farmers, Parameshwar said nearly 97 lakh farming families across the state continue to face difficulties in obtaining land rights and related documents. He stated that efforts would be made to address these concerns and provide relief to farmers through effective administrative measures.

Speaking about senior Congress leader and former minister K.N. Rajanna, Parameshwar said they share a friendship spanning nearly five decades. He added that efforts are being made to secure cabinet representation for Rajanna and emphasized the importance of unity within the party. He said leaders who have worked together for many years must continue to stand together for the development of the state.

Responding to questions about the chief ministerial position, Parameshwar said the decision was made by the party high command. He expressed support for the leadership and said the government would work collectively to fulfill promises made to the people and ensure good governance across Karnataka.

District leader pushes H.K. Patil cabinet inclusion request

GADAG

District Congress leader Munna Reshmi wrote to AICC leaders urging that H.K. Patil be given a cabinet minister post in the upcoming expansion

A strong appeal has been made urging the Congress party leadership to include senior leader and former minister H.K. Patil in the state cabinet, highlighting his long political career and administrative experience.

District Congress leader Munna Reshmi has written to AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, senior leader Sonia Gandhi, and Karnataka Congress in-charge Randeep Singh Surjewala, requesting that H.K. Patil be given a cabinet-level ministerial position in the upcoming expansion.

In her letter, she stated that H.K. Patil has been active in politics for nearly four decades and is known for his clean public image, development-oriented thinking, and administrative efficiency. She noted that during his tenure as Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister, he received the Prime Minister's Award four times for good governance and implementation of development programmes.

She also highlighted that institutions such as the RDPR University in Gadag and a government medical college in the district stand as examples of his contribution to regional development. His involvement in the cooperative sector and his efforts toward North Karnataka's progress were also appreciated in the appeal.

According to the letter, H.K. Patil's experience and leadership would be valuable for the state if he is included in the cabinet. It further stated that leaders with long public service records should have been given ministerial responsibilities earlier, considering their contribution to both the party and the region.

The appeal also urged party leadership to consider the sentiments of people from North Karnataka and ensure fair representation in the cabinet.

Protect nature to protect human life: MLA

HANGAL

MLA Srinivas Mane has said that if strong and timely steps are not taken to protect nature, the very existence of living beings will be at risk. He stressed that safeguarding the environment is directly linked to safeguarding human life.

He was speaking after inaugurating the "Thimmakka Vrikshe Dhyana" programme, a study initiative on tree conservation organised by the Forest Department at C.G. Bella Government First Grade College in Akkialur. On the occasion, he also participated in the release of the book "Ashwatthamara Hundred Emotions".

Mane expressed concern over the rapid environmental changes being witnessed today. He said global temperatures are rising, rainfall patterns are becoming irregular, and extreme heat and cold conditions are increasing.

The seer said Zameer Ahmed Khan and MLA Shivalingegowda are likely to get ministerial responsibilities soon

Swamiji predicts Zameer Ahmed's return to cabinet

HASSAN

Kodi Math seer Sri Shivananda Shivayogi Rajendra Swamiji has expressed confidence that senior leader Zameer Ahmed Khan will once again become part of the state cabinet, stating that his presence is important for stable governance.

The Swamiji made the remarks while speaking at a scholarship programme held at Al Amin School in Arsikere. He said that Zameer Ahmed Khan would return to ministerial responsibilities and added that his leadership continues to play a significant role in state politics.

He further stated that there should be no doubt about Zameer Ahmed Khan's political future and claimed that efforts are being made in this regard. According to him, discussions have already taken place with concerned leaders, and further steps would be taken to ensure his inclusion in the cabinet.

The seer also said that along with Zameer Ahmed Khan, MLA Shivalingegowda would also receive ministerial responsibility. He added that leadership decisions would eventually reflect these developments.

Swamiji remarked that Zameer Ahmed Khan has contributed to society with a secular outlook and has worked for public welfare. He appealed to supporters to remain calm and continue to extend support to him.

He also stated that Zameer Ahmed Khan's role is important for governance and suggested that his presence in the cabinet would contribute to administrative stability. He expressed confidence that these political developments would take shape in due course.The remarks made by the seer have attracted attention in political circles, as discussions continue over possible changes in the state cabinet. Supporters of the leader welcomed the statement and expressed hope for his return to ministerial office.

MASSIVE TUMKUR BOOK FAIR SET TO INSPIRE

PAVAGADA

Veeraloka Book Fair convener R.K. Srinivas called upon book lovers, writers, readers and Kannada enthusiasts to participate in the three-day book fair scheduled to be held on June 26, 27 and 28 at the Glass House in Kalpataru Nadu, Tumkur.

Speaking at a preparatory meeting held at Guru Bhavan in Pavagada, he said the fair is being organised to promote reading habits, encourage authors and provide a wider market for books. He noted that similar fairs organised in collaboration with the Kannada Sahitya Parishad in Bengaluru and Bidar received an overwhelming response from visitors and book enthusiasts.

More than 300 noted authors are expected to participate in the event. Over 70 book stalls will be set up, displaying and selling more than 1.5 lakh books. The fair will provide a platform for direct interaction between readers, authors and publishers. Seminars, book release programs and discussions will also be conducted during the event.

Organisers have also planned free health check-up camps, children's play zones, marketing activities and various cultural programs. More than one lakh visitors are expected to attend the fair during the three days.

Dr. K.M. Prabhakar, Treasurer of the Taluk Kannada Sahitya Parishad, said the event would help readers access a wide range of books and share their views directly with publishers and authors. He urged organisations and institutions to extend their support and help spread awareness about the fair across villages.

Several dignitaries, writers, organisers and literary enthusiasts attended the meeting and appealed for public participation to make the event a grand success.

BSP leaders focus on strengthening organisation at grassroots

MAGADI

Leaders of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) have announced plans to strengthen the party at the grassroots level with the long-term goal of making party chief Mayawati the Prime Minister in the 2029 Lok Sabha elections.

The announcement was made during a meeting held at a tourist temple in Magadi on Sunday for the selection of party office bearers. BSP district in-charge Ashok Kumar said the party is committed to building a strong and influential organization across Bengaluru South district.

He stated that taluk committees have already been successfully formed in Kanakapura, Channapatna and Ramanagara, and the meeting in Magadi was organized to further expand the party structure and strengthen its presence in the region.

Another district in-charge, Ramachandru, said booth-level meetings are being conducted in villages across the state to build the party from the grassroots level. He expressed confidence that party workers would work collectively to expand the organization and increase public support.

District vice-president Ganesh said the party had witnessed a decline in activities in recent years but is now entering a new phase of growth through the appointment of fresh office bearers. He said BSP leaders and workers would visit every village to strengthen the party and prepare for future elections.

Ganesh also claimed that the party aims to become a decisive political force in Karnataka by the 2028 Assembly elections. He said the broader objective is to create conditions that would make BSP a significant player in state politics while working toward Mayawati's national leadership ambitions in 2029.

During the meeting, new office bearers for Magadi taluk were elected unanimously.

₹2 crore road collapses in one month, anger rises

MOLAKALMURU

Allegations of poor quality work and corruption have surfaced after a newly built road in Molakalmuru taluk reportedly deteriorated within a month of construction, raising strong criticism from villagers against officials and contractors.

The Erannagudda–Konasagar link road, constructed under the Chief Minister's Infrastructure Development Scheme at a cost of around ₹2 crore, has allegedly been damaged over a stretch of nearly 3 kilometres shortly after completion.

Locals said the asphalt layer appears to have been laid on an unprepared muddy surface, leading to rapid damage.

Teaching is sacred duty, says Education Officer

HAVERI

Teaching is not just a profession but a sacred responsibility that plays a key role in nation-building, said B. Srinivas, the newly appointed Field Education Officer of Haveri taluk. He was speaking after inaugurating the taluk Aided Headmasters' Association, attending the oath-taking ceremony and felicitation programme of newly appointed education officers held at Rachoteshwar P.P. Commercial College in Hukkeri Math, Haveri.

Srinivas said that teachers not only impart knowledge but also shape students into responsible citizens of the country. He emphasized that building good character in children is as important as academic success.

He also highlighted the importance of improving academic performance in the district. Haveri taluk secured third rank in the district in last year's SSLC examinations, and he called for collective efforts from all schools to achieve the first rank in both district and state this year. He urged schools to aim for 100 percent results.

The officer assured that all schools, whether government, aided or unaided, would be treated equally, and efforts would be made to resolve issues faced by teachers while focusing on improving educational outcomes.

During the programme, the Haveri Taluk Aided High School Headmasters' Association was formally constituted. Basavaraj Kori, headmaster of Mrityu A Jaya High School in Kurubagonda, was elected unopposed as the president of the association.Chandrashekar Barabhalli of Handiganur High School was elected honorary president, while V.M. Olekara of SMS School, Haveri, was chosen as secretary. Other members were also selected unanimously. Association leaders said they would work in coordination with the education department to improve academic performance and address teachers' concerns.

CREATIVE PERFORMANCE CAMP

Satvik Foundation theatre camp ends with praise

MYSURU

The concluding ceremony of the free 40-day theatre training camp organised by Satvik Foundation in collaboration with the Directorate of Kannada and Culture, Bengaluru, was held successfully at the Kiru Ranga Mandira in the Kalamandira premises, Mysuru.

The programme brought together social workers, academics and art patrons including Ahinda Javarappa, Janavi, Dr. Sudarshan M.V., Mallikarjuna Swamy, Saraswathi and theatre director Ankit Raj, who participated in the final event and encouraged young performers.

Speaking at the inauguration, Ahinda Javarappa appreciated the creative adaptation of Kuvempu's Sri Ramayana Darshanam and Valmiki Ramayana into a new stage production and said such experiments add fresh meaning to Kannada theatre while urging the public to support and watch the play in large numbers.

Janavi highlighted that young people should develop interest in theatre and cultural activities instead of excessive mobile use as it helps in personality development, while Saubhagyavati K said theatre plays an important role in shaping social awareness and communication skills among students.

The highlight of the event was the play Kishkindha Kalaha performed by camp participants which received strong appreciation from the audience for its storytelling and acting performances, drawing a packed house and positive response.Organisers said the Satvik Foundation has been promoting cultural activities for the past three years and continues to support emerging artists through training and performance opportunities while thanking all supporters and participants for making the camp a success.

QUICK READ

Adoption program gives 72 children new homes

CH NEWS, Udupi
In the past 10 years, 72 orphaned children in Udupi district have found new families through legal adoption, offering hope to childless couples and safe homes for children in need. Sri Krishna Anugraha Palan Kendra in Santekate, the district's only aided adoption centre, has facilitated adoptions across India and abroad while 373 applications are still pending. Since 2015-16, 82 children were registered, 66 were adopted in India and 6 overseas, with the highest number recorded in 2022-23. Officials said adoption is a long legal process involving registration, home study, child matching and approval to ensure child welfare and family security.

MEEF announces scholarships for CET rank students

CH NEWS, Mangaluru
MEEF has invited applications for scholarships to support higher education for students who have secured CET ranks within 30,000 and belong to economically weaker sections of the Muslim community. The scheme supports students pursuing courses such as CA, UPSC, KAS, NIT, IIT, IISc, IIM, B.Ed, M.Ed and LLB, with preference for those from MEEF institutions or government schools. Applicants must not be beneficiaries of other scholarships or free seats. The scheme covers Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Kodagu, Chikkamagaluru, Shivamogga, Hassan and Uttara Kannada districts. Applications close on June 10 and selection will be on merit basis.

Belagavi to get cabinet representation: Jarkiholi

Jarkiholi said Belagavi deserves cabinet representation and expressed confidence in fair regional and community-based allocation by high command

BELAGAVI

Minister Satish Jarkiholi has said that Belagavi district will definitely receive additional representation in the upcoming second list of cabinet expansion and assured that there is no question of neglecting the district in ministerial allocation.

Speaking to reporters at his residence in Gokak, he said that the cabinet formation process is still incomplete and only the first list has been released so far. He added that people and local leaders should not worry as the district will be given due importance in the next phase of appointments. Jarkiholi said Belagavi is a large district and deserves proper representation in the state cabinet. He expressed confidence that the party high command will ensure fair distribution of posts by considering all regions and communities equally in the final list.

He also clarified that he was not upset over not being appointed as KPCC president, explaining that the Congress party follows a strict "one person, one post" rule. Since he is already serving as a minister, he said he accepted the decision and respects party discipline.

The minister denied any differences with former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and said their relationship remains strong and cooperative. He also said there is no internal conflict in the leadership and all senior leaders are working together for the party's goals and governance priorities.

On cabinet representation for different communities, Jarkiholi said the final decision rests with the party high command, which will ensure balanced representation without injustice to any group. He noted that discussions regarding leaders such as Zameer Ahmed Khan are already under consideration at the higher level.

He further said he was satisfied with his allocation of the Public Works Department and highlighted that several infrastructure projects including roads and bridges have progressed well under his leadership. He added that continuing in the same department will help complete ongoing development works efficiently.

Jarkiholi also dismissed rumours of internal differences among local leaders in Belagavi and said there is unity within the party. He added that the government will take appropriate action on complaints related to financial irregularities after proper investigation and legal review.

Dakshina Kannada: Ramiza Banu named JD(S) Women's Wing Chief

MANGALURU

Ramiza Banu has been appointed as the new president of the Janata Dal (Secular) Women's Wing for Dakshina Kannada district, in a leadership change aimed at strengthening the party's organisational structure and expanding women's participation at the district level.

The appointment was made on the recommendation of district JD(S) president Madhava Gowda and formalised during a state-level women workers' meeting held at JP Bhavan in Bengaluru. The official appointment letter was presented to Ramiza Banu by state JD(S) Women's Wing president Rashmi Ramegowda.

Party leaders stated that the decision is part of ongoing efforts to empower women within the organisation and improve grassroots outreach in coastal Karnataka. The leadership also expressed confidence that the new district unit head will play a key role in mobilising women workers and strengthening party activities across the region.

The event saw the presence of several senior JD(S) leaders, including State Core Committee president G.K. Krishna Reddy, former minister Leeladevi R. Prasad, former MLC K.A. Tippeswamy, and other state-level functionaries. Leaders Kanyakumari, Shrimani, and Rajeshwari also attended the programme, along with party workers from different districts.

Speakers at the meeting highlighted the importance of increasing women's participation in political decision-making and strengthening organisational structures at the district level.

They noted that such appointments are intended to build leadership capacity among women and ensure greater representation within the party's framework.

LPG price hike sparks political debate in Bidar

BIDAR

The minister criticised the 29 LPG cylinder price hike, saying it adds financial burden on poor and middle-class families already facing rising living costs

The recent increase in domestic LPG cylinder prices has triggered strong political reactions, with Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Eshwar B. Khandre questioning the Union Government's economic policies and asking whether this reflects the promised "Achhe Din."

The minister criticised the ₹29 hike in 14.2 kg household LPG cylinders, stating that the price increase has come at a time when common people are already struggling with rising living costs. He said the repeated hikes in essential fuel prices over the past few months have placed additional financial pressure on both poor and middle-class families.

Khandre alleged that nearly ₹90 worth of burden has been added in the last three months due to multiple price revisions. He claimed that such increases reflect mismanagement and anti-people policies by the central government, which have negatively impacted household budgets across the country.

He also pointed out that commercial LPG cylinder prices have crossed ₹3,200, leading to higher operational costs for hotels and, in turn, increased food prices in the market. According to him, the ripple effect of fuel price hikes is being felt across all essential goods and services.

Referring to the past, the minister said that during the UPA government, even small price increases were met with protests by BJP leaders, but now there is silence despite repeated hikes. He questioned the opposition's consistency on public issues and alleged double standards in political responses.Khandre further criticised the removal of LPG subsidies and rising petrol and diesel prices, stating that these factors have contributed to overall inflation. He said that the current economic situation has made life increasingly difficult for vulnerable sections of society, especially low-income and middle-class households.

He urged the Centre to reconsider its pricing policies and take steps to reduce the burden on citizens, stressing that essential commodities should remain affordable for all sections of society.

Responding to repeated public appeals, Mangaluru MP inspected the black spot on Sunday and assured early construction of a service road

MP Visits Accident-Prone Bannadka, Promises Safe Crossing

MANGALURU

MP Capt. Brijesh Chowta visited the Bannadka stretch on Sunday following persistent demands from local residents who have been concerned over frequent road accidents in the area. He carried out a detailed spot inspection of the location that has earned a reputation as a high-risk zone in recent times.

Locals brought to his notice the absence of a service road during the ongoing National Highway expansion work. Capt. Chowta immediately promised to install a service road and crossing line. He issued strict instructions to the contractor to execute the pending works in a proper and timely manner. While speaking to the media, the MP explained that people had demanded a service road across a 600-metre gap. He has already held discussions with the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways as well as officials in the Bengaluru regional office. Preparation of the estimate has begun, and the service road work will start immediately after procedural approvals are received.

He acknowledged the strong public demand for a skywalk or proper crossing facility. The matter will be taken up with the local MLA and residents in the coming days to arrive at a suitable decision. Although land acquisition issues exist at two or three locations, the works will proceed according to the original plan.

Capt. Chowta noted that the earlier narrow highway is now being widened into a four-lane road. He urged the public to exercise maximum caution while travelling on the stretch during the construction period. He has directed the National Highway authorities and contractors to install sign boards at all necessary points as a preventive measure against accidents. The MP expressed his strong desire to see the entire National Highway project completed at the earliest.

Blood donation camp in promotes social harmony

UPPINANGADI

A blood donation camp organised by Team Aghora Ubar at the Model Higher Primary School in Uppinangadi witnessed a strong response from donors, highlighting community participation and social awareness around voluntary blood donation.

Puttur Congress MLA Ashok Rai, who participated in the programme, emphasized that blood donation transcends all social and religious divisions. He stated that blood is universal and does not carry any distinction, reinforcing the message that humanitarian service should be free from discrimination. He added that donated blood would ultimately benefit patients in need, particularly those from economically weaker sections.

The MLA further noted that during medical emergencies, people only seek blood without considering the donor's background, which itself reflects the unity and equality inherent in such acts of charity. He encouraged more citizens to come forward for voluntary blood donation, describing it as one of the noblest forms of service to society.

The event was attended by several community leaders and dignitaries, including Dr. Rajaram Uppinangadi, Muralidhar Rai Matantabettu, Vikram Shetty Antara, industrialist Sudesh Shetty, and representatives of Team Aghora such as honorary president Santosh and president Brijesh. Their presence highlighted broad community support for the initiative.

During the programme, the 2026 Pilipajja calendar was also officially released, adding a cultural element to the social service event. Organisers said the camp was aimed at strengthening awareness about the importance of maintaining adequate blood stocks in hospitals and encouraging regular voluntary donations.

City gets 45 lakh boost for road development in Kannur ward

MANGALURU

A key infrastructure upgrade has been launched in Mangaluru's Kannur Ward (52nd Ward), where a ₹45 lakh road development project is set to improve connectivity between Sri Vaidyanatha Temple and a residential area in Kaverangadi. The project includes construction of an approximately 300-metre-long road along with a drainage system, aimed at addressing long-pending civic demands from local residents.

The foundation for the work was formally laid through a ceremonial groundbreaking event (Gudali Pooje), led by MLA Vedavyasa Kamath. He stated that the project fulfills a demand that had remained pending for several years and will significantly improve local commuting conditions and drainage management in the area.

The MLA also acknowledged the efforts of former corporator Chandravati Vishwanath, noting that consistent follow-up and coordination helped bring the proposal to execution stage. The initiative

has been taken up under a special grant allocation for ward-level infrastructure development.

The event saw participation from several local leaders and community representatives, including former Mayor Sudhir Shetty Kannur and members of the Sri Vaidyanatha Temple committee. Residents of Kaverangadi and surrounding areas were also present, welcoming the commencement of the long-awaited work.

Local citizens expressed hope that the new road and drainage system will ease transportation difficulties, especially during the monsoon season when waterlogging and poor road conditions have historically affected daily movement. The project is expected to improve accessibility to the temple and nearby residential pockets, while also enhancing overall civic infrastructure in the ward. Officials indicated that the work will be completed in phases, with continuous monitoring to ensure quality standards and timely execution.

Govt announces recruitment for 3,395 constables

KALABURAGI

Home Minister Priyank Kharge announced that the Karnataka State Police Department has invited online applications for direct recruitment of 3,395 Civil Police Constable posts across various districts, cities and units in the remaining cadre of the department.

He said the recruitment process will be conducted by the Karnataka Examinations Authority through an offline OMR based competitive written examination and detailed information regarding the process has been made available for eligible candidates.

Out of the total posts, 2,266 are reserved for male candidates, 755 for female candidates, 257 for serving men, 82 for serving women and 35 for third gender candidates, with selected candidates receiving a salary ranging from ₹37,500 to ₹76,100 along with National Pension Scheme benefits.

The minister said applicants must have PUC or equivalent qualification including CBSE, ISC, NIOS or a three year diploma, while the age limit is 18 years minimum and up to 33 years for general category with relaxations up to 35 years for SC ST and backward classes and 38 years for tribal candidates.

World Environment Day marked with youth focus

YADGIR

World Environment Day celebrations were held at DDU school in Yadgir city, where speakers emphasized that protecting and preserving the environment is a primary responsibility of the youth. The programme highlighted the need for greater awareness and active participation of young people in environmental conservation efforts.

Addressing the gathering, DDU Group of Educational Institutions administrator Mallikarjun Meti stated that safeguarding the environment and promoting sustainable practices should be considered an essential duty of the younger generation. He stressed that youth involvement is crucial in addressing environmental challenges and ensuring a greener future.

As part of the celebration, a tree plantation and watering drive was conducted at Devaraj Urs Higher Primary School, symbolizing the importance of nurturing green cover and promoting ecological balance. The event aimed to instil environmental responsibility among students through hands-on participation.

School headmaster Venkatesh Poojari, along with teachers Kavitha Patil, Huchappa Devaragonda, Prabhu Mailari, Nasreen Begum, Eeramma, Vandana H.P., Shakuntala, Mohammad Soudagar, and others, were present. Students actively took part in the programme, reflecting strong enthusiasm for environmental awareness activities. Speakers at the event reiterated that environmental protection should not be seen as a one-day activity but as a continuous commitment. They encouraged students to adopt eco-friendly habits such as tree planting, waste reduction, and conservation of natural resources in their daily lives.

The programme concluded with a collective pledge by participants to contribute towards environmental protection and to spread awareness in their communities, reinforcing the message that sustainable living is key to long-term ecological balance.

HOSPITAL WITH PURPOSE

KH Patil hospital lauded for kidney care initiative

KOPPAL

Sri Gavisiddeshwara Swamiji of Koppal Gavi Math visited the KH Patil Hospital and Research Institute at Hulakoti in Gadag district on June 07 and blessed the initiative, praising its service to the poor.

He said that KH Patil's strong resolve to build a hospital after his own kidney transplant struggle has become an example for society, and it now supports kidney transplant care for many poor patients in need.

Swamiji explained that true poverty is lack of good thoughts, not lack of money, and shared an example of a coconut-selling woman who, after personal tragedy, saved money and built a hospital so others would not suffer.

We should face difficulties and work hard to achieve dreams, he said, adding that like removing stones while eating, life challenges must be handled with courage, and he also recalled Ramana Maharishi's teaching of compassion even in suffering.

He planted a sapling in the hospital campus, met kidney transplant patients including journalist Hanumantha Hallikeri, and expressed happiness about their recovery and the hospital's continued service.

Doctor Avinash Odugaudra, organization secretary Dr Vemana, and several district journalists including Raju Hebballi, Sharanu Patil, Suresh, Harish H S, Santosh Deshpande, and Maulahusain Buldiyar were present.

Overall, the visit highlighted the importance of service-driven healthcare and community support in rural areas, where compassion and determination can change lives, especially for patients who cannot reach city hospitals easily, and the initiative continues to inspire people to contribute towards better medical facilities, hope, and dignity for the poor.

QUICK READ

4 workers die from toxic sewer gas

SURAT

Four workers tragically died after inhaling toxic gas inside a jewellery factory's underground treatment tank. Three labourers and a supervisor collapsed inside the confined space during a routine bimonthly cleaning operation in the Ashwini Kumar area. Firefighters rushed to the scene and pulled the unconscious men out, but doctors declared them dead at a nearby hospital. Preliminary police investigations revealed that the victims were working without mandatory protective gear or safety equipment. Officials have filed an accidental death case and launched a full inquiry to probe company negligence for ignoring hazardous work protocols.

Trinamool councilor arrested for child molestation

KOLKATA

Police arrested Trinamool Congress councillor Mohammad Jasimuddin for allegedly molesting and threatening a minor girl. Officers and central forces surrounded his Jorasanko home at dawn. After Jasimuddin locked himself inside for six hours, police broke open the door to detain him. The arrest sparked heavy local tension, with angry BJP workers throwing eggs at the politician. Jasimuddin faces serious charges under the POCSO Act. The victim, now a college student, filed a fresh complaint after being harassed to withdraw an older abuse case. He is the eighth local councillor arrested recently.

Chandigarh police officer arrested for bribery

CHANDIGARH

The CBI caught Assistant Sub-Inspector Hitesh Kumar red-handed while accepting a bribe. Posted at the Sector-39 station, Kumar demanded Rs 50,000 from a car owner to release a vehicle seized after an accident. He promised not to file a criminal case if paid. After negotiations, Kumar agreed on Rs 40,000, leading to his arrest during a CBI trap. Officials also searched his property for illegal wealth. Separately, the CBI booked railway clerk Rajneesh for demanding Rs 10,000 from a retired worker's family to release their pending allowance arrears.

Sikkim CM mourns accident that killed 4

GANGTOK

Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang expressed deep sorrow over a tragic accident that killed four residents traveling to Siliguri. The victims, from the Kabi-Lungchok constituency, died during the crash. Tamang offered heartfelt condolences to the families and praised rescue teams, including West Bengal Police and disaster responders, for their hard work. Warning that the tragedy highlights monsoon travel dangers, the Chief Minister urged everyone to stay alert during heavy rains. He advised citizens to check weather forecasts, avoid non-essential travel, and follow safety rules to prevent further heartbreaking losses.

India-Indonesia deepen comprehensive strategic ties

During the 8th Joint Commission Meeting co-chaired by S Jaishankar and Indonesian FM Sugiono, both sides discussed trade, maritime security, digital connectivity and regional co-op, with Jakarta expressing anticipation for PM Modi's visit.

NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono co-chaired the 8th India-Indonesia Joint Commission Meeting in New Delhi to boost bilateral relations.

The high-level dialogue focused on evaluating key priorities under the nations' expanding Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Following the meeting, Minister Sugiono announced that Jakarta eagerly awaits Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming official visit to Indonesia. He noted that the Prime Minister's visit will offer an excellent opportunity to deepen mutual cooperation and deliver practical benefits to citizens of both nations.

During the session, the leaders held productive discussions covering political ties, defense, maritime security, shipping, and trade.

They also explored deeper collaboration in fintech, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, critical minerals, tourism, and education.

Furthermore, the ministers reviewed ongoing regional developments and worked on advancing multilateral coordination to strengthen broader India-ASEAN ties.

The historical foundation for this Joint Commission Mechanism was established back in January 2001 through a bilateral memorandum. Relations between the two democracies have grown rapidly since being elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during PM Modi's Jakarta visit in 2018.

This latest meeting follows a string of high-profile diplomatic engagements, including a bilateral review on the sidelines of the BRICS gathering in May.

Additionally, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto visited New Delhi as the honored Chief Guest for India's 76th Republic Day celebrations in January 2025, marking a historic 75 years of formal diplomatic ties between the two countries.

DMK skips India bloc meet over Cong

INDIA bloc allies DMK and CPI-M slammed Congress for "backstabbing" partners, triggering a crisis ahead of their alliance meeting.

NEW DELHI

The opposition INDIA bloc faced a severe internal crisis as key allies DMK and CPI-M launched a scathing attack on the Congress party, accusing its leadership of "backstabbing" and "abusing" its coalition partners.

The political fallout intensified ahead of a crucial opposition alliance meeting scheduled for June 8. The DMK announced a complete boycott of the meeting after Congress broke off their alliance following the Tamil Nadu assembly elections. DMK spokesperson Saravanan Annadurai criticized Congress as opportunistic, stating that their presence would insult local party workers. He claimed Congress took advantage of DMK's hard work on the ground before abruptly switching political camps.

Simultaneously, the CPI-M demanded that Congress clarify its controversial poll campaign remarks in Kerala, where Congress leaders alleged a secret deal existed between the Left and the BJP. CPI-M leader Hannan Mollah criticized Congress leadership, specifically targeting Lok Sabha Opposition Leader Rahul Gandhi for failing to show political maturity. Mollah argued that a true coalition leader must unify everyone rather than publicly attacking partners in different states.

Adding to the alliance's growing troubles, severe seat-sharing disputes emerged in Jharkhand between the ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and Congress over upcoming Rajya Sabha elections.

'Thousands of crores in extorted funds were siphoned directly to the then ruling Trinamool Congress and its general secretary Abhishek Banerjee'

Malviya flags massive excise scam under TMC in Bengal

KOLKATA

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) launched a sharp attack against West Bengal's Trinamool Congress, alleging a massive multi-crore liquor excise scam.

BJP IT Cell Chief Amit Malviya claimed that the excise department intentionally altered its distribution policy in 2017 to extort local bottlers and liquor manufacturers.

Citing a confidential excise report, Malviya alleged that thousands of crores in extorted funds were siphoned directly to the then ruling Trinamool Congress and its General Secretary, Abhishek Banerjee. He compared the situation to the high-profile Delhi liquor scam.

According to reports, the policy change allowed the state to monopolize liquor distribution under the guise of stopping cartelization and ensuring transparency. However, the report alleges that the system was actually designed to force private wholesalers and manufacturers into paying unfair levies. Specifically, distributors were forced to pay an exorbitant charge of ₹4 per crate for warehouse rentals and ₹3 per crate for transportation costs.

Instead of entering the government treasury to boost public revenue, these collected margins allegedly found their way into party coffers. The confidential investigative report detailing these financial irregularities has already been submitted to West Bengal Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Agarwal.

Furthermore, prominent opposition leader Suvendu Adhikari has been fully briefed on the dynamic findings. The BJP claims this policy manipulated state resources for political funding, and they have vowed to push for a complete investigation to hold top leaders accountable for looting public money.

Coaching dispute puts Khan Sir under scanner

PATNA

The controversy surrounding popular digital educator and YouTuber Faisal Khan, famously known as Khan Sir, intensified in Bihar after police filed an FIR against him over a violent coaching institute dispute.

The criminal case stems from a major public disturbance reported on June 2 at a coaching center in Patna's Kadamkuan area.

Local police registered the case against Khan Sir, his two arrested private security guards, and several unidentified individuals.

The investigation took a dramatic turn when the detained bodyguards confessed to investigators that they had fired their rifles during the clash specifically under instructions from Khan Sir.

Reacting to the escalation, Bihar Minister Dilip Jaiswal stated that the state administration is functioning strictly within the legal framework. He asserted that the government will act purely based on established rules and evidence. Meanwhile, the opposition has raised concerns, alleging a deeper political conspiracy.

CPI-M leader Hannan Mollah defended the educator, stating that unlike highly exploitative coaching centers nationwide, Khan Sir provides incredibly affordable, high-quality education to students from economically weaker backgrounds.

Additionally, opposition parties claimed this case is being used to divert public attention away from the ongoing National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG) paper leak scandal. Samajwadi Party spokesperson Fakhrul Hasan Chand noted that students nationwide.

Police book Telegram channel for papers scam

LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Police launched a strict clampdown against fraudulent social media handles by lodging an FIR against a Telegram channel offering fake exam papers.

The targeted channel, named 'UPP Exam Paper', attempted to swindle competitive candidates by selling fake question papers for ₹8,000. It came under the police scanner after publicly sharing a QR code and specific bank account details to collect digital payments from desperate applicants.

The ongoing investigation pertains to the massive UP Police recruitment drive aimed at filling 32,679 vacant constable posts. Following the discovery, an FIR was promptly registered at the Hussainganj police station, and specialized teams are now tracking the channel's operator and linked bank accounts.

Meanwhile, the Uttar Pradesh Police Recruitment and Promotion Board issued a fierce warning to impersonators and fraudulent "problem solvers" trying to enter exam halls with forged documents. Officials warned that caught offenders would face severe penalties, including the potential demolition of their homes.

Allaying public fears regarding leaks, the recruitment board confirmed that authentic question papers are locked safely in strong rooms and will be transported to venues under strict official supervision. Candidates have been strongly advised to ignore misleading social media rumors. The major written examination is scheduled to begin on June 8, running until June 10 across 1,100 centers. Over 28 lakh candidates will appear for the three-day exam, which will be strictly conducted in two daily shifts.

No chance for reunion with Cong: DMK leader

PUDUKOTTAI

Senior DMK leader RS Bharathi firmly ruled out any possibility of a future political reconciliation with the Congress, asserting that the separation between the former allies is final.

Bharathi stated that the political relationship between the two parties has completely ended. He dismissed all speculation about a reunion, emphasizing that the DMK's grassroots workers would fiercely oppose any attempt to restore ties, regardless of any top-level leadership discussions.

His remarks come as a direct response to recent criticism from Congress leaders regarding the DMK's performance.

Taking a swipe at Congress leader Manickam Tagore, Bharathi suggested that Congress politicians should evaluate their own electoral standing before criticizing others.

Turning his attention to the upcoming local body elections, the veteran leader expressed absolute confidence in the DMK's organizational strength.

He challenged rivals, including the BJP, to a face-off in early elections, daring opponents to win even a single mayoral post. Reiterating his party's core Dravidian ideology, Bharathi completely ruled out any future alliance with the BJP.

Furthermore, he criticized the rising trend of political defections in Tamil Nadu, labeling it an opportunistic culture where leaders switch sides for personal gain. Downplaying the recent electoral success of actor-turned-politician Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), Bharathi called their win a temporary, personality-driven wave rather than an ideological shift. He predicted that TVK's social media popularity would eventually fade when tested by governance and public expectations.

Delhi hotel fire: 'Cook is no firefighter, release him'

DEHRADUN

The Uttarakhand Congress demanded the immediate release of Keshav Negi, a 65-year-old cook arrested in connection with the tragic Delhi hotel fire that killed 21 people.

Uttarakhand Congress president Ganesh Godiyal called for a fair, impartial probe into the June 3 blaze at the Flourish Stay B&B in Delhi's Malviya Nagar. The tragedy claimed 21 lives, including 13 foreign nationals. While property owner Lavkesh Bajaj was arrested earlier, Delhi Police took Negi into custody on, accusing him of negligence and fleeing without helping to extinguish the flames.

Godiyal strongly defended the chef, stating that panic is a natural human reaction during emergencies. He argued that it was highly unjust to expect an ordinary cook to fight a massive fire. "Did Negi have the professional responsibility of a firefighter?" Godiyal asked, emphasizing that Negi was simply a restaurant cook trying to save his own life.

The Congress leader fiercely accused the Delhi government of targeting an ordinary worker to hide its own systemic regulatory failures. He noted that over 10 lakh people from Uttarakhand live in Delhi, and warned that any discrimination against them would not be tolerated.

The defense follows similar support from Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami and BJP MP Trivendra Singh Rawat, who both demanded a transparent investigation to ensure an innocent man is not framed. Meanwhile, Negi's counsel informed the court that the blaze was actually triggered by an electrical short circuit, not kitchen negligence.

Kerala CM seeks Modi's help for paramedics in UAE

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking his urgent intervention to protect Indian paramedics facing an uncertain professional future in the UAE.

In his official letter, Satheesan highlighted that thousands of Indian healthcare workers, primarily nurses from Kerala, are currently experiencing severe visa-related hardships. The primary cause of the issue stems from a prolonged diplomatic stand-off between the United States and Iran within the Middle East region. This geopolitical tension has made it incredibly difficult for Indian professionals to secure vital employment, visit, or dependent visas.

The Chief Minister made specific reference to an Iranian hospital operating in Dubai, describing the condition of its working staff as extremely distressing. Due to strict employment restrictions imposed within the conflict-hit zone, many healthcare workers are fast approaching the end of their visa grace periods.

50 successful Agniveers feted

GUWAHATI

The Indian Army's dedicated pre-recruitment training initiative in Assam's Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) achieved major success, with 50 local Bodo youths receiving their official joining letters under the Agnipath recruitment scheme.

A grand felicitation ceremony was organized at Udalguri Higher Secondary School to honor the successful candidates and celebrate the training teams.

The event, jointly hosted by local civil society groups and the government, was attended by BTR Deputy Chief Executive Member Rihon Daimari.

He highly praised the Army's commitment to empowering local youth and providing them opportunities to serve the nation.

TIES SO DEEP

Nepal FM hails 'wonderful' relationship with India

NEW DELHI

Visiting Nepalese Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal praised the deep, historical relationship between Nepal and India, stating that both nations share a wonderful partnership with massive potential for future growth.

Speaking during his first official three-day visit to India since assuming office, Khanal emphasized that bilateral ties are uniquely multi-dimensional, spanning rivers, shared energy, tourism, and deep family connections. He expressed a strong desire to build upon these historical foundations to enhance mutual cooperation in trade, digital connectivity, and infrastructure.

Following a high-level meeting with Khanal, India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar handed over 72 newly rebuilt health facilities and 12 cultural heritage projects to Nepal, marking a milestone in the post-2015 earthquake reconstruction program. The two leaders also witnessed the signing of a key agreement between Digital India Bhashini and Kathmandu University to co-create a voice-first digital translation platform for Nepal.

When asked about recent controversial statements by Nepalese Prime Minister Balendra Shah regarding border encroachments, Khanal noted that his ministry had already issued a formal clarification.

He explained that the Prime Minister's remarks in parliament were strictly related to technical border studies regarding cross-border occupation and the "Fixed Boundary Principle" near shifting river borders, where citizens from both sides occasionally cross boundaries inadvertently.

Khanal affirmed that both democratic neighbors are committed to resolving technical territorial issues amicably through regular, high-level diplomatic dialogues to elevate their multifaceted friendship.

QUICK READ

Search on for missing woman in Uttarkashi

UTTARKASHI

Search teams have intensified their rescue operation in Uttarakhand's Dayara region to locate a missing woman. Specialized teams from the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, disaster response forces, and the revenue department are actively combing the area. The district administration has also launched an aerial search using a helicopter, tracking all possible paths around Dayara Bugyal. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, a local bus carrying thirty-nine passengers overturned near Kaudiyala due to a suspected brake failure. While thirty-one passengers escaped completely unharmed, emergency medical and police teams quickly arrived to treat eight individuals who sustained minor injuries.

Massive tourist rush paralyzes Dehradun-Mussoorie route

DEHRADUN

A massive influx of weekend tourists from Delhi-NCR has caused heavy traffic congestion on the Dehradun-Mussoorie route. Driven by school summer vacations and the ongoing Char Dham Yatra, vehicle numbers have spiked dramatically. To manage the gridlock, Dehradun Police implemented a special traffic plan, dividing the area into four super zones, ten zones, and nineteen sectors. High-ranking officers and shift personnel are actively regulating major intersections. Traffic official Ankit Kandari urged travelers to use designated parking spaces. Authorities are also using drone teams and real-time CCTV surveillance to quickly spot bottleneck areas and redirect crowded holiday traffic.

2 bodies discovered under Navi Mumbai trailer

NAVI MUMBAI

Police found the bodies of two men under a trailer in the busy APMC Market area. The deceased were identified as the driver and assistant of the heavy vehicle. While investigators are still probing the exact cause of death, authorities strongly suspect extreme heat as a major factor. Assistant Police Inspector Amit Shelar confirmed that both bodies have been sent for a thorough post-mortem examination to uncover the truth. Local officers have registered an official case and are examining the scene, as intense summer temperatures continue to raise serious health alarms for outdoor workers.

Orange alert issued for heavy Kerala rains

IDUKKI

The India Meteorological Department issued an orange alert for heavy rainfall in Kerala's Idukki district, warning of potential landslides. Due to dangerous weather conditions, District Collector Dineshan Cheruvatt strictly banned night travel in mountainous areas from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. to protect public safety. Local police and emergency teams will actively enforce this immediate travel restriction.

India-Nepal partner to advance multilingual AI

Both countries aims to build a voice-first translation platform, combining Bhashini's AI with Kathmandu University to break language barriers and digitize regional tongues

NEW DELHI

India and Nepal have joined hands to build a groundbreaking "voice-first" digital translation platform. The Digital India Bhashini Division signed an agreement with Nepal's Kathmandu University to co-create advanced language artificial intelligence and inclusive digital public infrastructure across both nations.

The agreement was signed by Bhashini CEO Amitabh Nag and Professor Bal Krishna Bal from Kathmandu University. Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Nepalese Foreign Minister Shishir Khanal witnessed the official exchange during high-level bilateral talks in New Delhi, highlighting their shared commitment to regional technology cooperation.

Going far beyond a simple tech partnership, this initiative aims to strengthen regional connections and defeat literacy barriers. The two institutions will actively build high-quality Nepali language datasets, speech-to-text systems, and conversational AI tools. Crucially, the project will also digitize underrepresented regional languages, protecting vulnerable mother tongues from digital extinction.

By using Bhashini's open-source system, the government of Nepal can soon deliver public services to citizens in their preferred native languages. This major shift will reduce digital barriers and offer fresh social and economic opportunities for Nepalese students, entrepreneurs, and professionals.

Amitabh Nag stated that the open model has the massive power to transform internet access for millions of people across South Asia. Meanwhile, Professor Bal emphasized that this collaboration ensures rich linguistic heritage becomes a true catalyst for future growth, making sure no community is left behind in the rapidly evolving digital age.

TN BJP labels TVK as 'DMK 2.0'

Tamil Nadu BJP Secretary Vinoj P Selvam attacked the newly-formed TVK government, terming it a "refreshed package" of DMK

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Bharatiya Janata Party Secretary Vinoj P. Selvam has launched a scathing attack on the state's newly formed government. He labeled the ruling Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam a "refreshed package" of the DMK that is actively ruining the state.

Selvam stated that citizens who voted for a real political change have mistakenly ended up with "DMK 2.0." He argued that the regional law and order situation has drastically worsened under the fresh TVK regime compared to the previous DMK administration.

The BJP leader highlighted growing public frustration, noting that large crowds are regularly protesting on the streets due to severe power outages and disrupted water supplies. He accused former allies of the DMK of joining hands with the TVK simply to keep a highly ineffective government in power. According to Selvam, this coalition cannot protect the state's interests on crucial matters, such as the ongoing Mekedatu water-sharing dispute over the Cauvery River.

Furthermore, Selvam claimed that former Chief Minister M.K. Stalin is attempting to intimidate the new TVK government. He argued that smaller coalition partners, who previously survived solely on the mercy of the DMK, have now shifted allegiance to help the TVK construct an anti-Hindu front.

Dismissing the political future of both rival parties, Selvam asserted that their administration will be exposed very soon.

Goyal opens HUL Suvidha toilet facility in Mumbai

MUMBAI

Union Minister Piyush Goyal inaugurated a modern Suvidha community toilet facility in Dahisar. The Commerce Minister and North Mumbai MP emphasized the critical need for dignified sanitation options for local slum residents.

Goyal referred to the public facilities as "Izzat Ghar," or Houses of Dignity, stating they play an essential role in the nation's ongoing development. He expressed his long-term desire to see all urban slums redeveloped into permanent, proper apartment buildings. However, the minister noted that until that comprehensive plan is fully realized, every citizen must have basic access to clean, safe toilets.

The newly opened center is part of a major public-private partnership. The project unites the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation with corporate giants like Hindustan Unilever, HSBC India, and the JSW Foundation. Goyal revealed that 25 centers have been successfully completed so far, with ambitious plans to construct another 100 facilities over the next three years.According to corporate officials, these specialized Suvidha centers currently serve over six lakh people living in Mumbai's informal settlements. They provide safe toilets, clean drinking water, private showers, and useful laundromat services.

The advanced centers also focus heavily on environmental sustainability, utilizing smart technologies that have saved over 250 million liters of water.

SP slams BJP over LPG price hike

PATNA

Leaders of the Samajwadi Party fiercely attacked the BJP-led government following a sudden rise in domestic LPG prices. Meanwhile, ruling party leaders defended the hike, explaining it as a moderate reaction to a global crisis.

The domestic cooking gas price jumped by 29 rupees per cylinder, triggered by rising costs amid the ongoing West Asia conflict.

Expressing deep anger, Samajwadi Party MP Neeraj Maurya accused the administration of failing miserably to control inflation.

He demanded an immediate all-party meeting to force the government to clarify its strategy.

Adding to the criticism, party leader Rajeev Rai called the government directionless and lacking vision.

He alleged that authorities intentionally waited for key elections to conclude before raising fuel prices in daily installments, forcing citizens to pay a heavy financial price.

Defending the move, Bihar BJP chief Sanjay Saraogi labeled the price hike a "global phenomenon.

" He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's foreign policies for ensuring the rate increase in India remains much lower compared to other struggling countries.

According to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Indian households still buy cooking gas much cheaper than neighboring countries and advanced economies like the United States.

Officials stated that due to massive government subsidies, general consumers in Delhi will pay 942 rupees for a cylinder, while welfare beneficiaries pay only 642 rupees, even though the actual global cost to supply the gas has surged to over 1,600 rupees.

Step out of offices, engage with residents: Min to babus

NEW DELHI

Delhi's Water and PWD Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh has ordered local officers to step out of their offices and actively engage with residents.

Speaking at a crucial administrative review meeting at Varunalaya, the minister demanded transparent, honest, and citizen-centric governance across the national capital.

Addressing the Zonal Revenue Officers, Minister Singh emphasized that public welfare initiatives and welfare schemes can achieve their true purpose only when they effectively reach the citizens they are meant to serve. He strictly directed all field officers to maintain consistent, everyday contact with local neighborhoods, listen closely to public grievances on the ground, and ensure critical information about government benefits smoothly reaches every household.

The minister firmly noted that the true measure of governance is what ordinary citizen's experience in their daily lives. He stated that officers must not remain confined within office walls, but should serve as a responsive, empathetic bridge between the administration and the public.

KERALAM ALL SET TO COUNTER SHIGELLA OUTBREAK

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala government has launched emergency health measures to counter regional outbreaks of the Shigella bacteria alongside international threats of the deadly Ebola virus.

Health Minister K. Muraleedharan announced that the state is on high alert after Shigella infections spread to three separate districts. The highly contagious intestinal bacteria spreads through contaminated water and stale food, causing severe diarrhea and fever. Following an initial death recorded at the Kozhikode Medical College, officials ordered food safety departments to carry out strict, immediate inspections across all local hotels, restaurants, and street food courts to halt further transmission.

Simultaneously, the state is strengthening its defenses against Ebola. A traveler who recently arrived from Uganda has been placed under strict precautionary quarantine. While no official case of the virus has been confirmed in India, the government has prepared dedicated isolation wards across four major medical colleges to immediately handle any suspected patients.

Fears eased slightly after health authorities in Rajasthan confirmed that a visiting Ugandan tourist tested negative for the virus in Jaipur. However, the World Health Organization and the Africa Centres for Disease Control have already declared the African outbreak a global public health emergency.

As a result, the Central government has strongly advised Indian citizens to avoid non-essential travel to affected African nations like Congo and Uganda. Minister Muraleedharan urged the public to maintain strict vigilance as the state works aggressively to secure its borders against both regional and global health hazards.

BJP chief Nabin pledges to transform Jharkhand's future

RANCHI

Bharatiya Janata Party National President Nitin Nabin announced that after leading the historical movement to create Jharkhand, the party will now focus its full energy on developing the state.

He asserted that grassroots party workers are completely determined to re-establish the BJP's "Lotus" symbol across the region.

Nabin stated that a renewed sense of enthusiasm is spreading through the party cadre. He emphasized that the BJP is prepared to work tirelessly to shape the state's economic and infrastructural future, just as it once struggled to establish Jharkhand as an independent territory.

Senior BJP leader Arjun Munda noted that the national president's two-day tour has provided immense inspiration to the organization, particularly energizing younger party workers.

Nabin's weekend visit involves a series of high-level meetings designed to review grassroots political performance, strengthen booth-level leadership, and expand the party's public outreach.

The state-level push follows a major national meeting of BJP State Presidents on June 2, chaired by Nabin and attended by National General Secretary B.L. Santhosh.

A central focus of that gathering was the launch of a massive public campaign celebrating the completion of 12 years of the NDA government at the Center.

Army launches 'Shumali Kashmir' portal to promote tourism

KUPWARA

In a major effort to uplift the local economy, the Indian Army has partnered with the local administration to launch a brand-new digital tourism portal named "Shumali Kashmir."

The fresh initiative aims to put North Kashmir's stunning border destinations directly on the global travel map.

The portal was unveiled during a high-profile stakeholder meeting held at the Deputy Commissioner's Office in Kupwara. Alongside the website, officials introduced the North Kashmir Tourism Magazine. Both digital resources were completely conceptualized, designed, and hosted by the Indian Army to highlight the rich cultural and natural heritage of under-explored border regions like Gurez, Keran, Karnah, and Machhal.

The launch event brought together regional administrators, hoteliers, tour operators, and local homestay owners. Tourism experts believe this collaborative push will greatly improve traveler access to reliable information, boosting local livelihoods through sustainable travel.

Beyond digital marketing, the venue hosted vibrant exhibition stalls showcasing local businesses backed by the military.

These community-led startups featured homegrown products ranging from locally manufactured LED bulbs to specialized washing powders and regional crafts.

Rain fury: Fadnavis asks farmers to delay sowing until June 15

MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced that the likelihood of widespread monsoon rains across the state will remain low until at least June 15. He strongly urged local farmers not to rush into seasonal crop sowing based on current temporary showers.

Sharing an official weather update, Fadnavis noted that while the southwest monsoon has successfully entered the South Konkan region, its overall pace and intensity are expected to drop significantly in the coming days.

Moderate to heavy rainfall is expected in the Sindhudurg and Ratnagiri districts only until June 9, after which the state will likely face a satisfying rainfall deficit.

ZONING SHIFT

Varanasi to shift meat, fish markets outside city

VARANASI

The Varanasi Municipal Corporation has announced a major policy shift to systematically relocate all meat, fish, and poultry shops outside city limits. The phased plan aims to improve urban sanitation, ease traffic congestion, and enhance public convenience across the historic city.

The decision was finalized during a general house meeting chaired by Mayor Ashok Kumar Tiwari at the historic Town Hall. Municipal Commissioner Himanshu Nagpal presented the strategic roadmap.

In the initial phase, five specific peripheral zones including Ramnagar, Sujabad, and Shivpur will host the relocated markets. This adjustment addresses long-standing zoning challenges, especially the recurring commercial disruptions faced by local traders during holy periods like the month of Shravan.

The local administration also approved several other development initiatives. To

generate municipal revenue, Mayor Tiwari ordered the immediate auction of 40,000 cubic meters of soil cleared from local water tanks. Additionally, contractors received strict deadlines to finish six major road projects under the Chief Minister Grids Scheme. The board also discussed establishing a massive 500-shop fruit market in Shivpur.

Promoting environmental sustainability, municipal officials symbolically arrived at the meeting using electric rickshaws. This collective action supported the city's "No Fuel Day" initiative, observed every Saturday to help lower carbon footprints. Civic leaders wrapped up the session with intense debates on critical welfare issues, focusing on clearing local pond encroachments, improving door-to-door garbage collection.

QUICK READ

Doctor hurt in acid attack in Quetta hospital

CH NEWS, QUETTA
A female doctor suffered severe injuries after a lift operator attacked her with acid at Quetta's Sandeman Provincial Hospital. The horrific assault in the surgery ward caused thirty-five percent burns. Police confirmed the suspect was killed shortly after in an encounter. Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti ordered officials to airlift the victim to Karachi for advanced medical treatment, with the government covering all expenses. In protest, the Young Doctors Association announced a boycott of non-emergency hospital services. Authorities are investigating the attack from multiple angles, promising strict safety measures for female medical staff.

Successive earthquakes rattle Greek island near Athens

CH NEWS, ATHENS
Two back-to-back earthquakes with a magnitude near 5 struck the Greek island of Evia, according to data from the Athens Geodynamic Institute. Fortunately, local officials have reported no injuries following the tremors. The double quakes caused minor disruption, with some reports of rocks falling onto island roads. The shaking was strong enough to be felt in the Greek capital of Athens, located roughly 130 kilometers northeast of the epicenter in northern Evia. Experts are continuing to monitor the region, but local authorities report that structural damage across the area remains very minimal.

US military shoots down two Iranian drones

CH NEWS, WASHINGTON
The United States military successfully shot down two Iranian attack drones that threatened international shipping lanes. According to the US Central Command, the unmanned aircraft were intercepted after posing an immediate danger to maritime traffic within the vital Strait of Hormuz. Iran has not yet responded to the incident. This confrontation follows a clash where American forces downed four dron es and struck Iranian coa stal radar stations. These escalating military actions mark a fresh spike in regional tensions, occurring despite ongoing indirect diplomatic talks between Washington and Tehran aimed at ending conflicts in the Middle East.

'North Korea will never give up on nuke weapons'

Sister of North Korean leader says Pyongyang's nuclear status is irreversible and nonnegotiable as Chinese leader begins 2-day trip Monday.

SEOUL

Ahead of Chinese President Xi Jinping's highly anticipated state visit to Pyongyang, Kim Yo-jong, the influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, declared that the nation's status as a nuclear-armed state is "absolutely irreversible" and entirely non-negotiable.

Her remarks, published by the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), called the nuclear weapons program a "line of no retreat." Political analysts view the statement as a strategic warning to Beijing that North Korea's nuclear arsenal will not be open for discussion during the upcoming bilateral summit.

President Xi is scheduled to visit North Korea from June 8 to 9 at the formal invitation of Kim Jong-un. This two-day visit marks Xi's first trip to the country in seven years, following his last visit in 2019. The two leaders last met in Beijing during China's Victory Day parade, an event also attended by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Kim Yo-jong fiercely dismissed recent statements from Washington, which claimed that US President Donald Trump and Xi Jinping had reaffirmed their shared goal of a denuclearized Korean Peninsula during their summit in Beijing. Accusing Washington of spreading "false information," she asserted that Pyongyang possesses accurate details regarding the US-China talks and urged the United States to abandon its "daydream" of North Korean denuclearization.

The timing of the diplomatic rhetoric is highly deliberate. Just days prior, KCNA released photographs of Kim Jong-un inspecting a newly launched nuclear-material production facility, showcasing the country's advanced capabilities in fissile material production.

Additionally, the summit takes place amid rapidly strengthening ties between Pyongyang and Moscow under a 2024 mutual defense pact, as well as the 65th anniversary of the China-North Korea Treaty of Friendship. Meanwhile, regional tensions continue to rise as Washington and Seoul fast-track talks to help South Korea build its own nuclear-powered attack submarines by the mid-2030s to counter the North's mounting military threats.

Sukkur barrage water crisis threatens Pak farmland

SUKKUR

A severe water crisis along the Sukkur Barrage is threatening millions of acres of farmland in Pakistan, sparking fierce political outrage. The critical shortage hits during the peak Kharif crop season, exposing deep internal rifts over resource management.

Local reports reveal alarming water deficits in vital channels. The Dadu Canal faces a staggering 82 percent shortfall, while the North West Canal is down over 64 percent. This systemic deprivation severely impacts key agricultural hubs like Larkana, Dadu, and parts of neighboring Balochistan.

Local officials blame upper-riparian regions for illegal water theft and unfair distribution. Data shows the Punjab province is drawing over 21 percent more than its allocated share. Meanwhile, federal authorities are accused of apathy, as water levels rise in upper reservoirs while downstream farming zones dry up. The crisis has triggered a massive political backlash. Pakistan Peoples Party leader Nisar Ahmed Khuhro warned that starving the region of water amounts to an "economic massacre." He highlighted that Sindh produces 67 percent of the national agricultural output and generates 1.4 billion dollars annually in rice exports.

Due to delayed infrastructure projects and low river flows, desperate farmers at the tail-end of the canal system cannot even begin planting their seasonal rice nurseries. Experts warn this ongoing mismanagement directly violates the nation's 1991 water sharing agreement. If left unresolved, the worsening scarcity will not only destroy essential crops but could also trigger dangerous new conflicts between provinces.

America's iconic landmarks host global yoga event

WASHINGTON

Famous American landmarks are gearing up to host grand celebrations for the 12th International Day of Yoga. Huge crowds will soon stretch across New York's bustling Times Square, the historic Lincoln Memorial in Washington, and Chicago's vibrant Navy Pier.

Wellness enthusiasts nationwide are preparing to practice mindful breathing and physical postures to boost mental and physical health. Beyond major cities, community gatherings are planned from tech hubs in Oregon to beautiful temples in Southern California.

In the nation's capital, the Indian Embassy invited the public to gather at the newly restored Lincoln Memorial reflecting pool on June 19. To build excitement, diplomats kicked off early celebrations on Saturday with an energetic, outdoor yoga session at the historic DuPont Circle.

Meanwhile, New York's flagship event at Times Square on June 21 will feature a special guest. HR Nagendra, the personal yoga guru of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will lead the massive crowd. Ahead of the main event, he will guide a specialized wellness retreat focused on stress relief and healthy aging.

In Chicago, organizers are promoting inner peace and togetherness at the prominent Polk Bros Park. This year's global theme focuses heavily on "Yoga for Healthy Ageing," highlighting how the ancient Indian practice improves mobility and longevity.

The global tradition began in December 2014 when the United Nations officially declared June 21 as the International Day of Yoga. Since its launch, the annual celebration continues to inspire millions worldwide to embrace healthier lifestyles.

Russian strike hits Chornobyl nuclear storage unit

KYIV

A Russian drone has deliberately targeted a nuclear fuel storage site near Ukraine's infamous Chornobyl power plant. Ukrai nian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy condemned the weekend strike, calling the dangerous move an "extremely vile" act of aggression.

Fortunately, officials confirmed the attack did not cause any spike in local radiation. The International Atomic Energy Agency stated that the blast heavily damaged a fuel-reception building. This structure sits just meters away from where large amounts of radioactive material are kept.Ukraine's state atomic agency, Energoatom, offered some relief by confirming that no nuclear fuel was inside that specific building during the strike. Emergency crews quickly put out a resulting fire, and no injuries were reported. The target sits roughly nine miles from the main Chornobyl plant, the site of the world's worst nuclear disaster in 1986.

Russia used an Iranian-designed Shahed attack drone for the strike but has not yet commented publicly. Zelenskiy warned that while radiation levels remain normal, Russia's boldness is reaching hazardous new heights. The global nuclear watchdog plans to send an inspection team to the site shortly to assess the full impact.

This is not the first close call for the area. Last year, another drone damaged a protective arch over the destroyed Chornobyl reactor. With both nations constantly trading blame over attacks near Europe's largest nuclear plants, this latest strike serves as a chilling reminder of the nuclear risks shadowing the conflict.

12 hurt as gunfire erupts near Ohio community fest

WASHINGTON

A mass shooting near a popular community street festival in Toledo, Ohio, left at least 12 people wounded, with two victims remaining in critical condition.

The Toledo Police Department responded to emergency calls near the intersection of Delaware Avenue and Glenwood Avenue, close to the annual Old West End Festival. Upon arrival, officers discovered multiple victims scattered across the area. The injured individuals, ranging in age from 14 to 61 with a majority in their early 20s, were immediately transported to local medical facilities.

Toledo Deputy Police Chief Joe Heffernan stated that investigators believe at least two shooters were involved, noting that they were "probably shooting at each other" when the crossfire struck innocent bystanders. The sudden burst of violence sent hundreds of festival-goers scrambling for cover in a panic, particularly around the Agnes Reynolds Jackson Arboretum where live music was playing.

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine expressed deep concern over the tragedy, stating that summer festivals should remain safe spaces for families to gather without fear of violence. Authorities have launched an extensive manhunt for the suspects, who remain at large, and are appealing to the public to share any cellphone footage or photos taken near the venue to aid the investigation. The Old West End Festival is a historic, two-day neighborhood celebration featuring home tours, art markets, and live music.

Bangladesh-Turkiye deepen defence, foreign ties

DHAKA

Bangladesh and Turkiye have agreed to set up a new joint ministerial committee focused on defence and foreign affairs. This special initiative aims to boost political cooperation and strengthen the historic ties between the two nations.

The major decision was announced following high-level discussions between Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan. The Turkish minister arrived in Dhaka for an official three-day visit to discuss bilateral issues.

According to a statement released by the prime minister's press wing and reported by the state-run BSS news agency, this new committee will serve as a shared platform for both countries. By working closely together, top ministers from both sides hope to build deeper strategic connections and create fresh opportunities for mutual growth. Diplomatic experts believe this partnership marks a significant step forward in modern relations between Dhaka and Ankara. Historically, Bangladesh and Turkiye have shared strong cultural and economic ties. However, this new committee introduces a structured way to handle sensitive matters like regional security and international diplomacy.

The joint panel will allow both governments to coordinate on global issues, share intelligence, and explore joint ventures in defence production. During the meeting, both leaders expressed great optimism about the future, noting that active collaboration will bring stability and prosperity to both regions. Moving forward, teams from both nations will finalize the operational details to ensure the committee begins its work promptly.

S. Korea Prez nominates Han Seong-Sook as PM

SEOUL

The country is set to get its first female Prime Minister in 15 years

President Lee Jae-myung nominated Han Seong-sook, the current Minister of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), as South Korea's next prime minister.

If confirmed by the National Assembly, Han will make history as the Lee administration's first female prime minister, and only the second woman to ever hold the position in South Korea, following Han Myeong-sook's tenure from 2006 to 2007.

The current Prime Minister, Kim Min-seok, is stepping down after serving as the administration's inaugural premier. According to regional reports, Kim's resignation is a strategic move to clear the path for his upcoming bid for the leadership of the ruling Democratic Party (DP) during its party convention late this summer.

Han Seong-sook brings a robust corporate and technology background to the position. Before entering public service at the start of the Lee administration, she served as the chief executive officer of South Korea's dominant online portal and search engine giant, Naver.

Announcing the high-profile nomination, Presidential Chief of Staff Kang Hoon-sik praised Han's unique qualifications, describing her as a leader uniquely capable of flawlessly driving South Korea's epochal transition to artificial intelligence and spearheading equitable economic growth. Kang also extended the presidential office's deep gratitude to outgoing Prime Minister Kim, crediting his lea dership for the government's major early policy successes.

This major cabinet reshuffle coincides precisely with the Lee administration marking its first full year in office, following the president's inauguration on June 4 last year.

President Lee is scheduled to address the nation soon in a major press conference, where he will reflect on his first year in office and lay out his strategic policy vision for the remainder of his five-year term.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister's Office has already assembled a dedicated task force to assist Han in preparing for her upcoming parliamentary confirmation hearings.

YOON'S DRONE TRIAL

Prosecutors Seek Thirty Year Sentence For Yoon

SEOUL

A South Korean court is scheduled to deliver its verdict this week on former President Yoon Suk Yeol regarding charges that he ordered military drone incursions into North Korea to create a pretext for his 2024 martial law declaration.

The Seoul Central District Court will hold the high-profile sentencing hearing on June 12. Yoon faces multiple serious charges, including benefiting the enemy and abuse of official authority. Prosecutors allege that Yoon ordered the South Korean military to fly drones over Pyongyang in October 2024, intentionally escalating regional conflict to justify the short-lived martial law decree he enacted on December 3, 2024. A special counsel team, led by Cho Eun-suk, has demanded a 30-year prison sentence for the former president.

Earlier in the investigation, Yoon underwent rigorous questioning by a special counsel team led by Kwon Chang-young in Gwacheon, where he reportedly denied the core allegations.

In addition to Yoon, the court is set to rule on several top military officials implicated in the operation. These include former Defense Minister Kim Yong-hyun, former head of the Defense Counterintelligence Command Yeo In-hyung, and Maj. Gen. Kim Yong-dae, the former chief of the Drone Operations Command. Kim Yong-hyun, accused of directly leading the drone deployment, faces charges of abuse of authority and destruction of military installations.

The special counsel stated that the unauthorized drone operations severely heightened military tensions on the Korean Peninsula and compromised critical military secrets.

The upcoming verdict follows a landmark ruling in February, where Yoon was sentenced to life in prison for his failed martial law bid.

Peru votes in tied Presidential election

LIMA

Peruvians voted in a razor-thin presidential election. The tight race will either extend Latin America's recent shift toward conservative leadership or disrupt the regional trend by electing a market-rattling leftist candidate.

Voters face a stark choice between conservative Keiko Fujimori and leftist Roberto Sanchez. Recent polls show the two candidates in a statistical tie, mirroring the sharp divisions across the nation.

Fujimori is the daughter of former hardline President Alberto Fujimori, who was jailed for human rights abuses. Leaning into her father's tough legacy, she has focused her campaign on fighting soaring homicide and extortion rates. Her anti-crime message strongly resonates with citizens fatigued by violent organized crime. Conversely, Sanchez wears a traditional cowboy hat and champions rural communities, echoing the appeal of former President Pedro Castillo.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, KANTHAMAMMA W/o SUBRAMANI M, R/o 251, Sulthanpet, Nandi, Chikballapur, Chikkaballapur, Karnataka-562103, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KANTHAMMA.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MANJUNATHA S/o KARIYAPPA, R/o 56, 4th Cross Left Side, Marnamibyle, Shimoga Doddapete, Shimoga, Karnataka-577202, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as K ANJENAPPA.

PUBLIC NOTICE / WARNING

It is hereby informed to the general public that my client Sri. A.S.SUDHEENDRA, M/S SUMAYA PROPERTIES MYSURU, had issued a Blank Cheques bearing No.s 522018,502741 drawn on IDBI Bank, in favour of Sri. Srikanth J.V. S/o J. P. Vijay Kumar (AADHAAR NO: 7178 3962 1950), was duly issued in connection with a transaction which is completed and the said cheque has not been returned.

It has come to my client's knowledge that there are misleading statements/claims suggesting misuse of the said cheque. I hereby clarify that the said cheque was issued only towards a genuine transaction which has already been completed, and therefore there is no question of misuse.

Any person dealing or relying upon any contrary claims shall be doing so at their own risk and responsibility. The issuer of the cheque shall not be liable for any loss or consequence arising there from.

This public warning is issued to prevent any misuse, misrepresentation or confusion in respect of the above-mentioned cheque.

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26-05-2026

QUICK READ

Jefferies bullish on three Adani power companies

Ahmedabad

Global brokerage Jefferies has reiterated its positive stance on key Adani Group companies, maintaining "Buy" ratings on Adani Green Energy, Adani Power and Adani Energy Solutions. The brokerage cited strong expansion plans, improving execution and growing demand visibility. It set a target price of ₹1,435 for Adani Green, highlighting its renewable energy growth ambitions. For Adani Power, Jefferies assigned a target of ₹255, supported by capacity additions and long-term power purchase agreements. Adani Energy Solutions received a target of ₹1,665, with optimism driven by transmission projects and smart-meter deployment. Jefferies expects sustained earnings growth across all three businesses over the medium term.

OpenAI plans ChatGPT "superapp" with major overhaul

New Delhi

OpenAI is reportedly preparing its most significant overhaul of ChatGPT yet, aiming to transform the AI platform into a "superapp" that combines coding tools, AI agents and third-party services. According to a report by the Financial Times, the redesign will give greater prominence to OpenAI's coding product, Codex, and is expected to roll out in the coming weeks across ChatGPT's web and mobile platforms. The revamped interface will guide users toward features such as coding, image generation and integrated services from partners including Canva and Booking.com. The move comes as OpenAI expands its enterprise business and seeks stronger revenue growth amid increasing competition in the artificial intelligence market.

Gautam Adani tops Asia rich list

New Delhi

According to Forbes Real-Time Billionaires list, Gautam Adani has risen to a net worth of $89.2 billion, overtaking Mukesh Ambani and Masayoshi Son to become Asia's richest individual. The surge came as shares of several Adani Group companies, including Adani Green Energy, Adani Power, and Adani Energy Solutions, advanced in recent trading. Forbes reported that the combined market value of major Adani firms has strengthened significantly. The group has also benefited from renewed investor confidence following regulatory developments and settlement of US-related cases. Ambani, chairman of Reliance Industries, was valued at $88 billion, while Son of SoftBank stood at $87 billion. The ranking reflects recent stock market gains overall sentiment.

Musk highlights India's declining fertility and demographic shift

Elon Musk highlighted India's declining fertility rate, warning that births falling below replacement level could reshape demographics.

NEW DELHI

Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk has drawn attention to India's falling birth rate, noting that the country's fertility level has dropped below the replacement rate needed to maintain long-term population stability. Musk shared his views on social media platform X while responding to data indicating a steady decline in births across the country.

According to recent figures, India's total fertility rate (TFR) has fallen to 1.9 children per woman, below the replacement level of 2.1. The decline marks a significant demographic shift for a nation

that recently became the world's most populous country after surpassing China in population size.

Musk remarked that India's birth rate has been below replacement level among highly educated groups for several years. His comments came in response to reports highlighting that fertility rates have decreased from 2.3 to 1.9 over the past decade. In Delhi, the fertility rate has reportedly dropped to 1.2, a figure lower than that of several developed countries.

Experts say the trend reflects broader social and economic changes. Rising education levels, urbanisation, greater participation of women in the workforce, and changing family preferences have encouraged smaller family sizes in many parts of India. Improved access to healthcare and family planning services has also contributed to the decline.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has noted that while India has made considerable progress in health and education, challenges remain. Social and economic inequalities, maternal mortality, gender discrimination, early marriage, and teenage pregnancies continue to affect many communities.

Although India's population currently exceeds 1.46 billion, demographers suggest that sustained fertility rates below replacement level could eventually lead to population ageing and a gradual decline in overall population. The development is expected to shape future economic, social, and policy discussions across the country in the decades ahead.

Reforms strengthen India's business climate and global rank

NEW DELHI

Government says sustained reforms have improved investor confidence, strengthened competitiveness, and enhanced India's global business reputation.

India's sustained economic and regulatory reforms over the past 12 years have significantly enhanced the country's global standing, strengthened investor confidence, and improved the ease of doing business, according to an official government factsheet released on Sunday.

The government said its approach has shifted from a compliance-heavy framework to a facilitation-driven ecosystem, making business operations more efficient and transparent. The impact of these reforms is reflected in several global assessments and rankings that measure competitiveness, governance, and digital transformation.

India's performance in the World Bank's Doing Business Report highlighted notable progress, with the country's ranking improving from 142 in 2014 to 63 in 2019. The government described this as evidence of successful efforts to simplify regulations and reduce procedural barriers for businesses.

The factsheet also pointed to improvements in the IMD World Competitiveness Ranking 2025, where India moved from 43rd position in 2021 to 41st in 2025. The ranking evaluates economic performance, government efficiency, business productivity, and infrastructure development.

India's digital governance initiatives have also received global recognition. The country was placed in the top category of the World Bank's GovTech Maturity Index in 2020, 2022, and 2025, reflecting strong performance in public service delivery, digital engagement, and government technology systems. The United Nations E-Government Survey similarly awarded India high scores for online services, telecommunications infrastructure, and human capital development.

The government highlighted the success of flagship initiatives such as Startup India, which has transformed the entrepreneurial landscape. Recognised startups increased from just 502 in 2016 to more than 2.23 lakh by March 2026, generating over 23.3 lakh direct jobs. Nearly half of these startups have at least one woman director or partner.

Other reforms, including the AI-driven MCA21 platform and the Udyam Registration Portal, have streamlined compliance processes, encouraged formalisation, and strengthened support for micro, small and medium enterprises across the country.

Weak market sentiment erased Rs 1.25 lakh crore from seven top firms as benchmark indices ended lower

Seven top firms lose Rs 1.25 lakh crore

MUMBAI

A weak week for Indian equities resulted in a sharp erosion in the market value of several blue-chip companies, with seven of the country's top-10 most valued firms collectively losing nearly Rs 1.25 lakh crore in market capitalisation.

The broader market sentiment remained subdued as benchmark indices ended the week in the red. The BSE Sensex declined by 532.4 points, or 0.71 per cent, while the NSE Nifty slipped 181.05 points, or 0.76 per cent, reflecting cautious investor sentiment amid market volatility.

Reliance Industries suffered the biggest decline among the top companies. The energy-to-telecom conglomerate saw its market valuation shrink by Rs 39,718 crore, bringing its total market capitalisation down to Rs 17,47,321.40 crore. Despite the decline, Reliance retained its position as India's most valuable listed company.

Tata Consultancy Services also recorded a significant fall, with its valuation dropping by Rs 20,134.66 crore to Rs 7,95,346.09 crore. Telecom major Bharti Airtel lost Rs 18,736.04 crore in market value, reducing its overall valuation to Rs 10,96,150.49 crore.

Engineering and infrastructure giant Larsen & Toubro witnessed a decline of Rs 16,880.2 crore in market capitalisation. Life Insurance Corporation of India also faced selling pressure, losing Rs 14,610.74 crore during the week.

In the financial services segment, Bajaj Finance recorded a loss of Rs 9,681.36 crore, while Hindustan Unilever's valuation fell by Rs 5,909.23 crore.

However, not all major companies ended the week on a negative note. State Bank of India emerged as the biggest gainer, adding Rs 12,692.09 crore to its market capitalisation. ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank also posted gains, helping cushion broader market losses.

At the end of the week, Reliance Industries remained the most valued company, followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank and State Bank of India.

Markets may trade cautiously amid mixed technical signals

MUMBAI

- Markets likely to remain range-bound.
- Nifty momentum indicators remain weak.
- Sensex faces key resistance hurdles.
- Bank Nifty shows recovery signs.
- Global cues keep investors cautious.

Indian equity markets are expected to remain range-bound in the coming week as mixed technical indicators and uncertain global cues keep investors cautious despite supportive domestic policy measures.

Market experts believe benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty are currently trading in a consolidation phase, with technical indicators suggesting limited upside unless key resistance levels are decisively breached. While domestic fundamentals continue to provide support, weakening momentum signals indicate that traders may adopt a wait-and-watch approach.

For the Nifty, analysts noted that the overall technical outlook remains cautious. The Relative Strength Index (RSI) on the weekly chart is hovering around 39.64, reflecting weakening momentum and placing the index in a neutral-to-bearish zone. This suggests that buying interest remains subdued and sustained upward movement may require stronger triggers.

On the upside, immediate resistance for Nifty is seen at 23,900, followed by a stronger hurdle near 24,100. On the downside, support levels are placed at 23,200 and 23,000. Analysts warn that a decisive break below the 23,000 mark could intensify selling pressure and lead to further downside in the near term.

The Sensex is also displaying a cautious technical structure. Experts identified the 74,600–74,800 range as immediate resistance, while the broader 75,500–75,800 zone remains a significant barrier for the index. A sustained move above these levels would be necessary to improve market sentiment and revive bullish momentum.

Meanwhile, Bank Nifty has shown some resilience by holding above the crucial 53,000 level, resulting in a rebound that has improved short-term sentiment. However, the index continues to trade below key medium-term averages, indicating that caution remains warranted.

Analysts said Bank Nifty's weekly RSI has improved to around 44, signalling gradual strengthening in momentum. Immediate support lies between 53,900 and 53,000, while resistance levels are placed at 55,000 and 55,800. A breakout above these levels could strengthen recovery prospects in the weeks ahead.

FY27 GDP growth seen moderating to 6.5%

NEW DELHI

India's economic growth in FY27 is expected to moderate to around 6.5 per cent, as external headwinds such as El Niño-related weather disruptions and elevated geopolitical costs weigh on overall momentum, according to recent reports.

Economists suggest that while India continues to remain one of the fastest-growing major economies globally, the pace of expansion may ease compared to earlier projections. The moderation is being attributed to a combination of cyclical and external factors that could impact both consumption and investment activity over the medium term.

One of the key risks highlighted is the impact of El Niño conditions, which are known to disrupt monsoon patterns in South Asia. A weaker or uneven monsoon could affect agricultural output, thereby influencing rural demand and food inflation trends in the Indian economy.

In addition, geopolitical tensions and associated supply chain disruptions are expected to add to input costs for industries. Higher logistics expenses, volatile energy prices, and uncertainty in global trade conditions may collectively weigh on corporate margins and investment decisions.

Despite these challenges, analysts note that India's underlying growth drivers remain intact, supported by strong domestic consumption, ongoing infrastructure expansion, and continued government capital expenditure. The services sector, particularly digital services and financial services, is also expected to remain a key growth engine.

However, the pace of private investment recovery remains a crucial variable. Businesses are likely to remain cautious until global uncertainties stabilise and demand visibility improves.

Inflation management and monetary policy direction will also play an important role in shaping growth outcomes. Stable price conditions and supportive policy measures could help cushion some of the external pressures.

'Make in India' cuts import dependence amid shocks

NEW DELHI

India's ongoing industrial push under the Make in India is showing visible results, with import dependence declining in several key sectors despite continued global economic uncertainties and supply chain disruptions, according to a Bank of Baroda assessment.

The report notes that India's manufacturing ecosystem has become more resilient over the past few years, supported by policy incentives, infrastructure upgrades, and targeted efforts to localise production. This shift has helped reduce reliance on imports in critical areas, even as global trade faces shocks from geopolitical tensions and fluctuating commodity prices.

Sectors such as electronics, pharmaceuticals, and machinery are reportedly witnessing increased domestic value addition. This improvement is being driven by stronger integration of local suppliers, expansion of industrial clusters, and rising participation of small and medium enterprises in supply chains.

Bank of Baroda analysts highlighted that import substitution trends are particularly evident in intermediate goods, where domestic manufacturing capacity has expanded significantly. The report suggests that this has helped cushion India's external account against global volatility and improved overall economic stability.

Reliance Infra challenges trading curb under insolvency rules

MUMBAI

Reliance Infrastructure has raised concerns over trading restrictions imposed on its shares under an insolvency-linked surveillance framework, arguing that the curb is impacting normal market activity despite continued investor participation and liquidity in the stock.

The company said its shares remain actively and widely traded on exchanges, reflecting consistent market interest. However, the regulatory classification under insolvency-related surveillance measures has led to additional trading restrictions, prompting the firm to seek a review of the framework. Reliance Infrastructure has urged authorities to reassess the applicability of such surveillance mechanisms, stating that blanket restrictions may not be appropriate in cases where trading volumes and investor engagement remain stable. The company's stance highlights a broader debate on balancing market integrity safeguards with fair access to trading. Market participants note that insolvency-linked surveillance frameworks are typically designed to protect investors from heightened risk in financially stressed companies. However, firms argue that such measures can sometimes lead to excessive constraints that distort price discovery and reduce liquidity.

ELECTRICITY GROWTH FORECAST

India set to drive global energy demand growth

ST PETERSBURG

India is poised to become one of the most influential forces in global energy markets, with its rapidly expanding economy expected to significantly drive demand for oil and electricity over the next decade, according to Igor Sechin.

Speaking at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, Sechin, chief executive of Russian oil major Rosneft, said India's energy consumption is on a strong upward trajectory and will play a central role in shaping global consumption patterns.

He noted that India is expected to account for about half of the global growth in oil demand and nearly 15% of the increase in global electricity consumption over the next decade. This positions the country as a key driver of future energy market dynamics

at a time when global demand patterns are shifting.

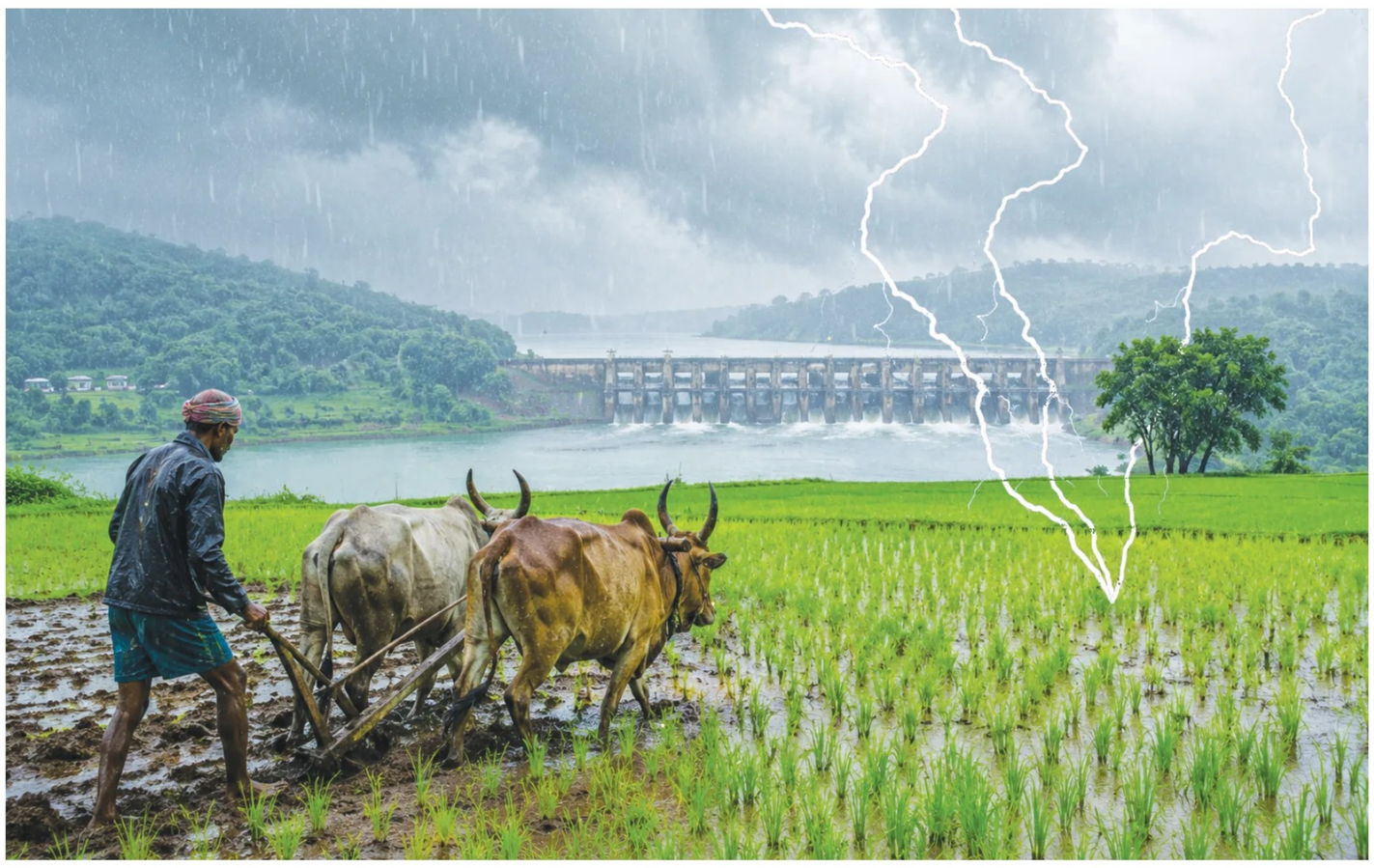
According to the projections, India's oil consumption could rise by around 44% to nearly 8 million barrels per day by 2035. Over the same period, electricity demand is expected to increase sharply by about 80%, reaching close to 3,000 terawatt-hours. This level would bring India's electricity usage closer to current consumption levels seen in the European Union.

Sechin also highlighted that India's expanding industrial base, urbanisation, and rising household consumption are the primary factors behind this surge in energy demand. Rapid infrastructure development and growing manufacturing activity are further accelerating energy requirements.

The remarks underline India's growing importance in global energy geopolitics, as major producers and exporters increasingly focus on its long-term demand outlook. Energy analysts say this trend could influence investment decisions in oil production, refining capacity, and renewable energy expansion worldwide.

As India continues to grow, balancing rising energy needs with sustainability goals is expected to remain a key policy challenge for the coming decades.

Monsoon Arrives in Karnataka: A Lifeline for Farmers and Reservoirs



For the millions of farmers spread across Karnataka's diverse agro-climatic zones, the monsoon is nothing short of a lifeline. Agriculture in the state, particularly in the northern and central interior regions, is heavily dependent on rainfall. When the first showers drench the soil, the landscape transforms from dusty brown to a vibrant green, signaling the start of the crucial Kharif sowing season.

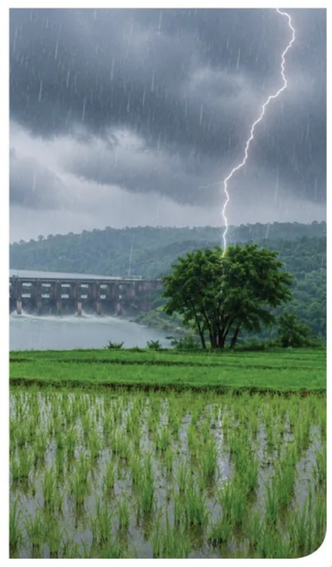
The rains are equally critical for the state's massive network of reservoirs. Dams such as the Krishna Raja Sagara, Tungabhadra, and Almatti serve as the primary sources of drinking water and irrigation for vast swathes of the population. After a long summer, water levels in these reservoirs often dip to alarming lows, sparking anxieties about water security and agricultural viability. A healthy monsoon replenishes these vital water bodies, ensuring that cities have drinking water and farms have irrigation for the months ahead.

Improved Water Storage: The steady inflow of rainwater into major catchment areas helps restore dam levels, providing a buffer against future dry spells and ensuring hydroelectric power generation remains stable.

Agricultural Prospects: Timely rains allow farmers to plant staple crops like paddy, maize, cotton, and pulses. The success of these crops directly dictates the food security and rural prosperity of the entire region.

Drought Relief: For districts that frequently battle semi-arid conditions, the monsoon breaks the cycle of drought, rejuvenating groundwater tables and saving local livestock from severe water shortages.

Despite the joy of the first rains, anxiety always lingers. Forecasts of below-normal rainfall or delayed onset can trigger immense stress. Farmers must carefully choose their crops, sometimes opting for shorter-duration or drought-resistant varieties if the rain clouds seem hesitant.



From Relief to Risk: How Karnataka Prepares for the Monsoon Season

The transition from the scorching summer to the wet monsoon requires massive logistical and administrative preparation. While the initial showers are celebrated, the persistent downpours that follow quickly turn relief into a significant risk management challenge. State and local authorities must mobilize resources to handle the inevitable fallout of heavy, continuous rainfall, particularly in vulnerable coastal and low-lying areas.

Preparation involves a complex coordination of various civic and emergency bodies. Drains must be cleared, riverbanks monitored, and emergency shelters prepped for potential evacuees. In regions like Kodagu and Dakshina Kannada, where the topography makes them susceptible to landslides and flash floods, the preparation is even more intense.

Tackling Flooding: Authorities map out historic flood zones and position emergency response teams nearby. Evacuation plans are dusted off and updated, ensuring that vulnerable communities can be moved to safety at a moment's notice.

Managing Traffic Disruptions: Traffic police and civic agencies work to identify waterlogging hotspots on major arterial roads. Pumps are deployed in low-lying underpasses to prevent the kind of gridlock that can paralyze a city for hours.

Infrastructure Strain: Power lines, bridges, and aging buildings are inspected. The monsoon places immense weight—literally and figuratively—on the state's infrastructure, and pre-emptive maintenance is crucial to prevent catastrophic failures.

The preparation is never perfect. Every year, unanticipated extreme weather events test the limits of these contingency plans, reminding everyone that nature ultimately dictates the terms of the season.

The Economic Impact of Monsoon in Karnataka: Winners and Losers

The financial ripples of the monsoon are felt in every corner of Karnataka's economy. It is a season that creates distinct economic winners and losers, reshaping market dynamics, employment opportunities, and daily commerce. The most obvious beneficiary is the agricultural sector. A robust monsoon translates to a bountiful harvest, which puts money into the hands of rural consumers. This, in turn, drives rural demand for everything from tractors and fertilizers to consumer goods and two-wheelers, providing a significant boost to the broader economy. However, the urban economy often tells a different story. The service sector, daily wage earners, and small-scale vendors face steep challenges when the skies open up.

Agriculture and Rural Markets: Good rains stabilize food prices and boost rural incomes, creating a positive economic cycle that benefits manufacturers and retailers nationwide.

Tourism Industry: The impact on tourism is mixed. While hill stations and waterfalls draw "monsoon tourists" seeking lush green landscapes, overall travel often drops due to safety concerns and transport disruptions. Coastal tourism practically comes to a halt.

Transport and Logistics: The movement of goods slows down significantly. Waterlogged highways, damaged rural roads, and delayed railways increase transit times and freight costs, which can temporarily inflate the prices of perishable goods.

Daily Wage Workers and Street Vendors: For those who rely on daily outdoor labor—such as construction workers, street hawkers, and gig economy delivery personnel—the monsoon is financially devastating. A day of heavy rain often means a day without income, pushing many into temporary financial distress.

Karnataka's Cities Under Rain: Urban Flooding and the Need for Better Drainage

Nowhere is the darker side of the monsoon more visible than in Karnataka's rapidly expanding urban centers, particularly Bengaluru. The state's capital, known globally for its technological prowess, frequently makes headlines for its crumbling infrastructure during the rainy season. Urban flooding has transformed from an occasional nuisance into a predictable, annual crisis. The root of the problem lies in explosive, unplanned urban growth. Natural water channels and lakes that once formed an interconnected drainage system have been heavily encroached upon or paved over. When heavy rains hit, the water simply has nowhere to go.

The Disappearing Lakes: Bengaluru was once a city of hundreds of lakes, designed to cascade into one another. Today, many have been reduced to concrete real estate, breaking the natural flow of stormwater.

Inadequate Drainage Networks: Existing stormwater drains are often clogged with solid waste, plastic, and construction debris. Even when cleared, their capacity is frequently insufficient to handle the volume of sudden, intense downpours.

The Asphalt Effect: The rampant concretization of the city means the ground can no longer absorb rainwater.

This massive surface runoff funnels directly into the streets, turning roads into rushing rivers. Fixing this requires massive political will and capital investment. Solutions involve not just clearing drains, but reclaiming encroached wetlands, redesigning road cambers to direct water flow efficiently, and strictly enforcing building codes that mandate rainwater harvesting and permeable surfaces in new developments.

Monsoon and Public Health: Staying Safe During Karnataka's Rainy Season

While the monsoon brings a much-needed drop in temperatures, it also ushers in a host of public health challenges. The combination of stagnant water, high humidity, and fluctuating temperatures creates a perfect breeding ground for pathogens and vectors. Hospitals and clinics across Karnataka typically see a sharp spike in admissions during these months.

Health authorities constantly battle to keep monsoon-related outbreaks under control, launching extensive public awareness campaigns about hygiene and sanitation.

Mosquito-Borne Illnesses: Diseases like dengue, chikungunya, and malaria are the most significant threats. Stagnant pools of water in discarded tires, empty pots, and open drains serve as ideal nurseries for mosquitoes.

Waterborne Diseases: Contamination of drinking water sources by overflowing sewage leads to outbreaks of typhoid, cholera, and severe gastroenteritis. Boiling water before consumption becomes an absolute necessity.

Fungal and Viral Infections: The constant dampness leads to widespread fungal skin infections, while the sudden shifts in weather contribute to a surge in viral fevers, colds, and influenza.

Preventive measures are straightforward but require strict adherence. Citizens are advised to use mosquito repellents, sleep under nets, maintain impeccable personal hygiene, and avoid eating street food that may have been exposed to contaminated water.

Green Karnataka: How Monsoon Revives Forests, Lakes, and Wildlife

Beyond the human experience, the monsoon orchestrates a spectacular revival of Karnataka's natural environment. The state is home to a significant portion of the Western Ghats, a UNESCO World Heritage site and a global biodiversity hotspot. The arrival of the rains is a deeply transformative event for these ecosystems, triggering a massive biological response.

The dry, deciduous forests shed their brown, brittle appearance almost overnight, bursting into a vibrant, impenetrable green. Rivers that had dwindled to mere trickles transform into roaring torrents, and seasonal waterfalls dramatically reappear across the mountainous terrain.

Ecosystem Restoration: The rains wash away the accumulated dust, allowing flora to photosynthesize at maximum capacity. This rapid plant growth provides an abundant food source for herbivores, which in turn supports the entire predatory food chain.

Avian and Amphibian Activity: The monsoon is the primary breeding season for countless species of frogs, toads, and insects. The forest floor becomes a cacophony of mating calls. It also marks the arrival of specific migratory birds and triggers nesting behaviors in resident species.

Recharging Wetlands: Beyond the forests, the state's wetlands and inland lakes are replenished. This is crucial not just for local wildlife, but for maintaining the micro-climate and groundwater recharge that surrounding human settlements depend on.

This environmental rejuvenation is a stark reminder of the intricate balance of nature. The monsoon doesn't just sustain human agriculture; it is the very heartbeat of Karnataka's wild spaces.

Monsoon on the Move: Challenges for Commuters Across Karnataka

For the everyday commuter, the monsoon often feels like an endurance test. The physical act of moving from point A to point B becomes fraught with delays, hazards, and intense frustration. Whether it is a software engineer navigating the traffic-choked streets of Bengaluru or a rural merchant trying to transport goods across a district highway, the challenges are ubiquitous.

The combination of poor visibility, slippery surfaces, and structural road damage creates a perfect storm for traffic chaos.

Road Conditions and Potholes: Asphalt roads are notoriously susceptible to water damage. Continuous rain strips away the top layers, creating massive, dangerous potholes hidden beneath muddy puddles. These crater-like hazards damage vehicles and frequently cause severe accidents, particularly for two-wheeler riders.

Traffic Congestion: Waterlogged underpasses and flooded intersections drastically reduce the usable road space. A commute that typically takes thirty minutes can easily stretch to over two hours, leading to immense losses in productivity and mounting road rage.

Public Transport Disruptions: While city buses continue to operate, they are often caught in the same gridlock as private vehicles. Suburban and inter-city railway networks frequently suffer delays due to track inundation or fallen trees, leaving thousands of passengers stranded at stations.

Safe travel during these months requires immense patience, defensive driving, and a reliance on real-time traffic updates. Many companies now implement flexible working hours or remote work policies during extreme weather warnings to keep their employees off dangerous roads.

Rainfall Extremes: Is Climate Change Making Karnataka's Monsoons More Unpredictable?

In recent years, the conversation around the monsoon has shifted from mere seasonal tracking to a deeper, more alarming discussion about climate change. The traditional predictability of the southwest monsoon—its steady onset, consistent spread, and gradual withdrawal—seems to be eroding. Meteorological experts and environmental scientists are increasingly pointing to shifting global climate patterns as the culprit behind Karnataka's erratic weather. The state is now experiencing the phenomenon of "micro-climates" and extreme weather events with disturbing frequency. Instead of a steady drizzle spread over weeks, districts are being hammered by the entire month's quota of rain in a matter of hours.

Changing Rainfall Patterns: The spatial and temporal distribution of rain is changing. Some regions suffer prolonged dry spells followed by sudden, catastrophic cloudbursts, making agricultural planning nearly impossible.

The El Niño Factor: Global phenomena like El Niño in the Pacific Ocean are heavily influencing local outcomes. These warming ocean temperatures often lead to subdued monsoon currents over the Indian subcontinent, resulting in below-normal rainfall and looming drought conditions for rain-fed areas.

Increased Frequency of Extremes: The rapid sequence of droughts followed immediately by severe floods in the same districts highlights the loss of climatic stability. This volatility destroys crops, triggers devastating landslides in the Ghats, and overwhelms urban drainage systems that were never designed for such sudden volumes of water.

Monsoon Safety First: Essential Precautions for Families, Schools, and Communities

Given the increasing unpredictability and severity of the rains, monsoon safety is no longer just a matter of carrying an umbrella; it requires proactive disaster preparedness at the household and community levels.

Schools, residential welfare associations, and local governments must collaborate to minimize risks and ensure public safety.

Electrical Safety: This is perhaps the most critical concern. Wet conditions and exposed wiring are a deadly combination. Families must ensure their home electrical systems are properly earthed. Communities must report leaning power poles or sagging cables immediately. Walking through waterlogged streets is incredibly dangerous due to the risk of unseen, submerged live wires.

Siniakova and Townsend capture French Open women's doubles crown

Top-seeded pair dominate final to secure maiden Roland Garros title.

PARIS

Top seeds Katerina Siniakova and Taylor Townsend claimed the French Open women's doubles title on Sunday, defeating the second-seeded duo of Anna Danilina and Aleksandra Krunic 6-2, 7-5 in a commanding final at Roland Garros.The victory marked the pair's first French Open triumph together and further cemented their status as one of the most successful partnerships currently competing on the women's doubles circuit.

Siniakova and Townsend entered the tournament as favourites and lived up to expectations throughout the fortnight. In the final, they produced a polished display of aggressive serving, sharp net play and effective teamwork to overpower their opponents in straight sets.

The opening set was one-sided, with the top-seeded pair quickly establishing control. Their consistent pressure and ability to convert key points helped them race to a 6-2 advantage.

The second set proved more competitive as Danilina and Krunic raised their level and attempted a comeback.However, Siniakova and Townsend remained composed during crucial moments, breaking serve late in the set before closing out the match 7-5 to secure the championship.

For Siniakova, the title adds another remarkable chapter to an already glittering doubles career. The Czech star has now won 12 Grand Slam women's doubles titles, strengthening her reputation as one of the finest doubles specialists of her generation.

The triumph also represents the third major doubles title won by the Siniakova-Townsend partnership. Their growing chemistry and success across the Grand Slam circuit have made them one of the most formidable teams in the sport.Townsend, who has enjoyed a resurgence in doubles competition in recent years, praised the partnership's consistency and determination throughout the tournament. The American's powerful left-handed game complemented Siniakova's experience and tactical awareness, creating a combination that proved difficult for opponents to counter.

The victory at Roland Garros crowns an impressive campaign for the pair and reinforces their position at the top of women's doubles tennis. With another Grand Slam trophy added to their collection, Siniakova and Townsend will now turn their attention to the grass-court season, aiming to continue their outstanding run of form on the international stage.

Grace Dangmei retires from international football after SAFF title triumph

MARGAO

Indian women's football stalwart Grace Dangmei has announced her retirement from international football, bringing the curtain down on a distinguished career that spanned more than a decade and established her as one of the country's most respected players.

The 30-year-old forward made the announcement after India defeated Bangladesh 3-1 in the final of the SAFF Women's Championship on Saturday, ending her international journey on a triumphant note. The victory secured her third SAFF title and provided a fitting farewell to one of Indian women's football's most influential figures.

Dangmei, who hails from Manipur, represented India 95 times after making her senior debut in 2013. Over the years, she became a key member of the national team with her pace, work ethic and ability to deliver in crucial matches.

Although she did not start the final against Bangladesh, Dangmei entered the match as a substitute and later received the captain's armband. In an emotional moment, she had the honour of lifting the championship trophy during the post-match celebrations, marking a memorable conclusion to her international career.Her retirement closes a chapter that lasted nearly 15 years and witnessed the growth of women's football in India. Throughout that period, Dangmei remained a consistent performer and role model for aspiring footballers, particularly in the country's northeastern states, which have produced many of India's leading women footballers.

At the domestic level, Dangmei enjoyed successful stints with several prominent clubs, including KRYPHSA FC, Sethu FC, Gokulam Kerala FC Women and Sribhumi FC Women.

She also made her mark overseas when she joined FC Nasaf Karshi Women in Uzbekistan in 2022. During her season with the club, she helped them secure both the league and cup titles while contributing four goals in 14 league appearances.

Dangmei leaves the international stage as one of India's most accomplished women's footballers. Her commitment, leadership and achievements have helped elevate the profile of the women's game and inspired a new generation of players to dream bigger and aim higher on the global stage.

Messi rests ahead of World Cup

COLLEGE STATION

Argentina captain Lionel Messi sat out his side's friendly against Honduras while recovering from muscle fatigue and a mild left hamstring strain ahead of the FIFA World Cup.

The 38-year-old warmed up with teammates but remained on the bench as Argentina secured a 2-0 victory.

Team officials said his return will depend on his recovery progress.

Argentina will face Iceland in a final warm-up match before beginning their World Cup title defence against Algeria on June 16.

Messi is widely expected to retire from international football after the tournament.

Brazilian icon's presence remains strong through museums, murals and memories.

Pelé's legacy continues to inspire Santos as World Cup excitement grows

SANTOS

As the football world gears up for another FIFA World Cup, the legacy of legendary Brazilian footballer Pelé continues to thrive in Santos, the coastal city that became synonymous with his extraordinary career.

More than three years after his death in 2022, Pelé remains an enduring presence across the city. Tourists from around the world continue to visit Santos to explore the places connected to the three-time World Cup winner, whose achievements transformed both Brazilian football and the sport globally.

Among the visitors is Mario Álvarez Gamiño, a retired salesman from Mexico, who travelled to Santos to experience the city's deep connection with the football icon. For many fans, Pelé's greatness extended beyond trophies and goals, encompassing qualities such as humility, sportsmanship and inspiration.

Pelé spent the majority of his illustrious club career with Santos FC between 1956 and 1974. During that period, he became one of football's most celebrated figures while also leading Brazil to World Cup triumphs in 1958, 1962 and 1970.

Today, his influence can be seen throughout Santos. Colourful murals by renowned street artist Eduardo Kobra decorate city walls, while posters and tributes continue to honour the football legend. The city's most significant tribute remains the Pelé Museum, which houses jerseys, trophies, photographs and personal memorabilia from his remarkable career.

Museum director Paulo Monteiro said preserving Pelé's legacy has become an even greater responsibility since his passing. He noted that for many people around the world, the name Santos is instantly associated with the football great.

Local residents also recognise the impact Pelé continues to have on the city. Business owners say international visitors and media attention generated by his legacy contribute significantly to tourism and local commerce.

Although many of Santos' younger residents never witnessed Pelé play, his story remains a source of pride and inspiration. As football fans worldwide look ahead to the next World Cup, Santos continues to celebrate the man widely regarded as one of the greatest players in the history of the sport, ensuring that his legacy endures for future generations.

Perez's 150 million 'Galactico' promise sparks election debate at Real Madrid

MADRID

A reported promise by Florentino Perez to pursue a €150 million "Galactico" signing if re-elected as president of Real Madrid has generated widespread discussion ahead of the club's presidential election, with many viewing the announcement as a strategic campaign move rather than an imminent transfer plan.

The speculation has centred on Michael Olise, the highly rated winger currently playing for Bayern Munich. Although Perez has not publicly identified any target, reports and social media discussions have linked the French international with a potential move to the Spanish giants.

The timing of the announcement has drawn attention as Real Madrid prepares for its first contested presidential election in nearly two decades. Perez, who has overseen one of the most successful eras in the club's history, faces a challenge from businessman Enrique Riquelme.

Promises of marquee signings have long been a feature of Real Madrid elections, dating back to previous campaigns that brought some of football's biggest stars to the Santiago Bernabéu. The prospect of another blockbuster acquisition has naturally excited supporters eager to see the club strengthen an already formidable squad featuring stars such as Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius Junior.

However, any attempt to sign Olise would face significant obstacles.

Pope Leo XIV backs United States ahead of FIFA World Cup campaign

NEW DELHI

Pope Leo XIV has expressed his support for the United States ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026, offering encouragement to the co-host nation as it prepares to begin its campaign in the expanded 48-team tournament.

The Pope, the first American to lead the Catholic Church, said he would be cheering for the United States during the competition, although his official commitments may limit the number of matches he can watch.

Speaking to journalists while travelling from Rome to Madrid, Pope Leo said he wished the American team the very best in the tournament. His remarks come just days before the World Cup kicks off across the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The United States enters the competition as one of the three host nations and will compete in Group D alongside Paraguay national football team, Australia national football team and Turkey national football team.

Born Robert Prevost in the Chicago suburbs, Pope Leo's connection to the United States remains strong despite decades spent serving as a missionary and bishop in Peru.

He also holds Peruvian citizenship, making his football loyalties a topic of curiosity among fans and media alike.

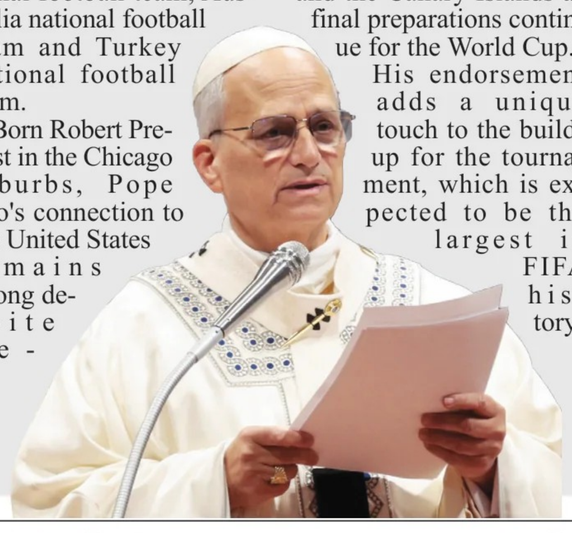
Last year, the Pope indicated that he would support Peru if the South American nation faced the United States on the football field.

However, Peru failed to qualify for the 2026 World Cup, leaving the U.S. as the sole beneficiary of his backing during this year's tournament.

The pontiff also revealed a personal football preference during the flight. When asked whether he favoured Spanish giants Real Madrid or FC Barcelona, he initially maintained neutrality, saying that the Pope supports all teams. However, referring to his life before becoming pontiff, he jokingly admitted a preference for Real Madrid.

Pope Leo is currently on a week-long visit to Spain and the Canary Islands as final preparations continue for the World Cup.

His endorsement adds a unique touch to the build-up for the tournament, which is expected to be the largest in FIFA history.



Iraq striker Aymen Hussein questioned for hours on arrival in US

BAGHDAD

Iraq's preparations for the FIFA World Cup have been overshadowed by reports that star striker Aymen Hussein was detained and questioned for nearly seven hours after arriving at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport with the national team.

According to an Iraqi sporting official with close ties to the squad, Hussein was held by US authorities following the team's arrival ahead of the tournament. After several hours of questioning, the 30-year-old forward was eventually cleared to enter the United States.

However, the team's photographer, Talal Salah, was reportedly denied entry after being held for more than 10 hours and subjected to similar checks, including an examination of his mobile phone.

There was no immediate official response from the Iraqi Football Association or Hussein regarding the incident. US authorities, including immigration and homeland security agencies, had also not publicly commented on the reports at the time.

Hussein is one of Iraq's most influential players and played a crucial role in securing the country's qualification for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. His goal in the qualifying campaign helped Iraq reach football's biggest stage for the first time since their only previous appearance 40 years ago.

PM MODI CONGRATULATES INDIAN WOMEN'S TEAM ON SAFF CHAMPIONSHIP TRIUMPH

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday congratulated the Indian women's football team for winning the SAFF Women's Championship 2026, saying their achievement would inspire more young players across the country to take up the sport.

India secured the regional title for the sixth time after registering a convincing 3-1 victory over Bangladesh Women's National Football Team in the final played in Goa. The triumph also marked India's first SAFF Women's Championship crown in seven years.

In a message posted on social media platform X, Modi praised the team's outstanding performance throughout the tournament and extended his best wishes for their future campaigns.

The Prime Minister noted that the success of the women's team would encourage greater participation in football among young athletes and further boost the growth of the sport in the country.

India entered the tournament as one of the favourites and lived up to expectations with a series of impressive performances. The team remained consistent throughout the competition before producing a dominant display against Bangladesh in the title clash.

The championship victory represents another significant milestone for Indian women's football, which has witnessed growing support and increased visibility in recent years. The success is expected to provide fresh momentum to the sport, particularly at the grassroots level.

Saturday's triumph was also an emotional occasion for veteran forward Grace Dangmei, who announced her retirement from international football after the final. The experienced player ended her national team career on a high by helping India secure another regional title and later lifting the trophy alongside her teammates.

The Indian squad's success has drawn praise from sports administrators, former players and fans across the country. Many have hailed the achievement as a reward for the team's hard work and consistent progress over the years.

Winning the SAFF Women's Championship not only reinforces India's dominance in South Asian women's football but also strengthens confidence ahead of future continental and international competitions. The players and coaching staff will now look to build on this success as they aim for greater achievements on the Asian stage.

For Indian football, the title serves as another reminder of the growing potential of the women's game and the opportunities that lie ahead for the next generation of players.

India chase T20 WC dream under burden of soaring expectations

Fresh from ODI triumph, India seek another global title abroad.

BIRMINGHAM

Fresh from ending a 47-year wait for a Women's ODI World Cup title, India enter the 2026 Women's T20 World Cup as one of the favourites, carrying both confidence and the weight of heightened expectations.

Led by captain Harmanpreet Kaur, India created history in November 2025 by lifting their maiden Women's ODI World Cup trophy at home. The triumph transformed the team's status, with fans and experts now expecting regular success on the global stage.

However, the challenge awaiting India in England is formidable. Drawn in a difficult group featuring Australia Women's Cricket Team, South Africa Women's Cricket Team, Pakistan Women's Cricket Team, Bangladesh and the Netherlands, India face a demanding route to the knockout stages.

Former India women's head coach WV Raman believes handling expectations could be one of the team's biggest tests. He noted that India are now viewed as genuine title contenders and must adapt to a level of pressure they have rarely experienced before.

India's recent form offers reasons for optimism. The team swept Sri Lanka 5-0 and secured a historic 2-1 T20I series win in Australia during preparations. Though subsequent tours of South Africa and England exposed inconsistencies in batting and bowling, Raman believes those setbacks were part of experimentation ahead of the tournament.

The team's biggest concern remains fielding. Missed chances, dropped catches and lapses in communication have repeatedly hurt India in crucial moments. Raman stressed that modern cricket demands high standards in fitness and fielding, areas where India must improve quickly.India will also rely heavily on senior stars such as vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, Harmanpreet and wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh to anchor the campaign.

While the batting line-up is regarded as one of the most explosive in the tournament, consistency will be vital.

India begin their campaign against arch-rivals Pakistan on June 14.

Having finally broken their World Cup drought last year, Harmanpreet's side now has an opportunity to convert expectation into achievement and claim a historic first Women's T20 World Cup crown.

Ashwin questions Suryakumar's removal

NEW DELHI

Former India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has questioned the decision to drop Suryakumar Yadav from India's T20I setup, arguing that the move could set a significant precedent for future selection decisions despite the batter leading the country to a T20 World Cup title just two months ago.

Suryakumar's removal has emerged as one of the biggest talking points in Indian cricket following a modest World Cup campaign in which he scored 242 runs at a strike rate of 136.72. His struggles continued in the IPL season, where he managed 270 runs at a strike rate of 147.54.

Ashwin said he could understand the disappointment the outgoing captain might be experiencing.

Ashwin noted that while Suryakumar's batting form had dipped over the past year, his contribution as captain could not be overlooked.

He pointed out that the Mumbai batter had played a key role in guiding India to World Cup glory and deserved recognition for his leadership achievements, just as other standout performers in the squad were acknowledged for their contributions.

The veteran spinner said the decision marked a "landmark day" in Indian cricket selection, suggesting it could influence how future selectors deal with captains and senior players.

He questioned whether there had been previous instances of a World Cup-winning T20 captain being left out of the side so soon after lifting the trophy.

The selectors have appointed Shreyas Iyer as India's new T20I captain, despite his absence from the national T20 setup for more than two years. Iyer's leadership credentials have been strengthened by successful stints in franchise cricket, including an IPL title-winning campaign with Kolkata Knight Riders in 2024 and a runners-up finish with Punjab Kings in 2025.

While backing Iyer's captaincy abilities, Ashwin said the promotion of a player from outside the World Cup-winning squad could spark debate among existing team members.

He also highlighted vice-captain Axar Patel as a potential leadership option, saying the development raises broader questions about succession planning within the national team.

Cricketer Lalwani, Asian medallist Ajith among 24 athletes suspended for doping

NEW DELHI

Cricketer Bhupen Lalwani, Asian Championship medallist Ajith Narayana and wrestler Sahil Jaglan are among 24 athletes from various disciplines who have been provisionally suspended by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) after returning positive dope tests.

The latest list, released by NADA, also includes women's 1500m national record holder KM Deeksha, whose sample tested positive for Stanozolol, a prohibited anabolic steroid.

Lalwani, one of the few Indian cricketers to face doping charges, tested positive for Terbutaline, a substance commonly used in asthma medication. Under World Anti-Doping Agency regulations, the drug is prohibited in and out of competition unless athletes receive prior therapeutic-use exemption approval. The domestic cricketer has represented Mumbai, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand in first-class cricket.

One of the most notable cases involves 19-year-old wrestler Sahil Jaglan. He tested positive for Stanozolol following an out-of-competition test conducted in March and was informed of the adverse finding in late May. Despite being provisionally suspended, Jaglan competed in the Asian Games selection trials in Lucknow on May 31, where he lost to Deepak Punia in the men's 97kg category.

The list also confirmed doping violations involving five weightlifters. Ajith Narayana, who won two bronze medals at the recent Asian Weightlifting Championships in Gandhinagar, tested positive for growth hormone. Fellow weightlifter Harcharan Singh also returned a positive test for the same substance.

Meanwhile, Vanshita Verma and Heena tested positive for Stanozolol, while S B Charukesh, a Khelo India Youth Games medallist, was also among those suspended.

BCCI to allow Vaibhav's parents on overseas tours after India call-up

NEW DELHI

India's newest cricket sensation, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, will have the support of his parents during overseas assignments after the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) agreed to facilitate their travel alongside the 15-year-old prodigy.

The decision comes after Sooryavanshi received his maiden senior India call-up for the T20 tours of Ireland and England, as well as the upcoming Asian Games. The teenage opener earned national selection following a breathtaking IPL 2026 campaign in which he emerged as the tournament's leading run-scorer.

BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia confirmed that the board would make arrangements if the youngster's parents wished to accompany him during the overseas tours. According to Saikia, Sooryavanshi's father was set to travel to Sri Lanka, where the batter is currently representing the India A side in a tri-nation series.

The board believes the presence of his parents will provide valuable emotional support as the teenager adjusts to the demands of international cricket at a remarkably young age.

India, the reigning T20 world champions, will begin their Ireland tour with matches in Belfast on June 26 and 28 before heading to England for a five-match T20I series starting July 1. The Asian Games in Japan are scheduled for September and October.

Sooryavanshi's rise has been one of the most remarkable stories in Indian cricket this year. Playing for Rajasthan Royals, the left-handed opener amassed 776 runs during IPL 2026, finishing with one century and five half-centuries. His exploits earned him the Orange Cap, the Most Valuable Player award and the Emerging Player honour.

His performances have also put him on course to become India's youngest-ever international cricketer, surpassing the record held by Sachin Tendulkar, who made his debut at 16 years and 205 days in 1989.

Chief selector Ajit Agarkar acknowledged that Sooryavanshi's performances left the selectors with little choice but to pick him, describing the youngster as a player who had effectively selected himself through sheer weight of runs.

With expectations soaring, India will hope their teenage star continues his meteoric rise on the international stage while enjoying the comfort of family support during the early stages of his career.

Long-term vision, form shaped selections, says chief selector Agarkar

MUMBAI

India's chief selector Ajit Agarkar has defended the sweeping changes made to the national T20 setup, saying the latest selections were influenced equally by long-term planning and recent performances as the team begins its build-up towards the next T20 World Cup.

The biggest decisions announced were the appointment of Shreyas Iyer as India's new T20 captain and the maiden call-up for teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. At the same time, World Cup-winning captain Suryakumar Yadav lost both the captaincy and his place in the squad.

Explaining the leadership change, Agarkar said selectors reassess the team's direction after every major ICC tournament. While acknowledging Suryakumar's contribution to India's successful T20 World Cup defence earlier this year, he said the panel had to consider the next two-year cycle leading up to the 2028 T20 World Cup.

Agarkar highlighted Shreyas' leadership credentials, pointing to his successful captaincy stints in the IPL. The Mumbai batter led Kolkata Knight Riders to the IPL title in 2024 and guided Punjab Kings to the final in 2025. He added that Shreyas was close to making India's recent World Cup squad and was viewed as the standout candidate for the captaincy role.

Rohit backs Shreyas to flourish as India's new T20 captain

MUMBAI

Former India captain Rohit Sharma has thrown his weight behind newly appointed T20I skipper Shreyas Iyer, saying the Mumbai batter has all the qualities needed to succeed in the leadership role and is set to enjoy a successful stint at the helm of the national team.

Shreyas was named India's new T20 captain as selectors opted for a fresh leadership direction ahead of major events, including the Asia Cup, the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics and the next T20 World Cup.

The appointment came alongside the omission of former skipper Suryakumar Yadav from the T20 squad.

Rohit said Shreyas' impressive captaincy record in the IPL has equipped him well for the demands of leading India.

The batter guided Kolkata Knight Riders to the IPL title in 2024 and later led Punjab Kings to the final in 2025, earning praise for his tactical acumen and leadership skills.

Rohit noted that representing Mumbai cricket teaches players resilience, discipline and accountability, qualities that are essential for captains.

He said leadership is not handed out easily and must be earned through performances and the respect of teammates.

The veteran opener, who led India to their second T20 World Cup title in 2024, expressed confidence that Shreyas possesses those attributes and is capable of handling the pressures associated with captaining the national side.

Rohit also paid tribute to Suryakumar's journey, describing him as an example of perseverance. He pointed out that Suryakumar made his international debut relatively late but never gave up on his dream and seized every opportunity that came his way.

Selectors ask Gill to prioritise Tests, ODIs till 2027 World Cup

MULLANPUR

India captain Shubman Gill has been advised by the national selection committee to focus exclusively on Test and ODI cricket until the 2027 ODI World Cup, with workload management emerging as a key concern amid a packed international calendar.

Despite enjoying a prolific IPL 2026 season, where he scored 732 runs at a strike rate exceeding 163, Gill was not included in India's T20 squads announced for the upcoming tours of England and Ireland and the 2026 Asian Games.

According to sources familiar with the selection discussions, the move is part of a long-term strategy aimed at ensuring the 26-year-old remains physically and mentally fresh for two major ICC assignments — the ongoing World Test Championship cycle and the 2027 ODI World Cup.

Gill is expected to lead India in nine crucial World Test Championship matches over the next 18 months while also playing approximately 35 One-Day Internationals before the World Cup. In addition, he continues to captain the Gujarat Titans in the IPL, adding significantly to his annual workload.

Selectors believe that participating in all three formats could increase the risk of burnout and affect his effectiveness in the formats where he currently holds leadership responsibilities.

India's T20 squad is also well stocked with top-order options, including Sanju Samson, Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan and teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, making it difficult to accommodate another specialist opener despite Gill's strong IPL form.

City Hilights (English Daily) published by P. Sunil Kumar (Publisher) on behalf of Immaculate Broadcasting Consortium World News (P) Ltd., No. 18, JRV Court, Queens's Road, Bengaluru – 560001 and printed at Vihaan Media #85/J, Industrial suburb 2nd stage, Yeshwantpur Extension,Bangalore-560022, Printed at No-7/2 plot no.CA-3/1,28(p)&29(p) Kapanoor 2nd Stage Industrial Area Kapnoor Village Kalaburagi -585104. Printed at S. J. R. V. Printers, No. 208 Plot No. B-019 KSSIDC Industrial Area, Irfan Ahamed Khan Pathan, 4th Main Road Gamanagatti, Hubballi-Dharwad – 580025. and Elegant Offset Printers Pvt. Ltd. No. 5-61/1, Shed No. M-6, Yeyyadi Industrial Estate, Yeyyadi, Mangalore - 575 008. (RNI No: KARENG / 2015 / 63243), Regd. No. BGGPO-2581/2017-2019 Posted at Bengaluru PSO-560026 Email - cityhilights.news@gmail.com Phone: 080-41209042. Copyright. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited.